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BY.

G. DE MONTAUBAN.

BOSTON.

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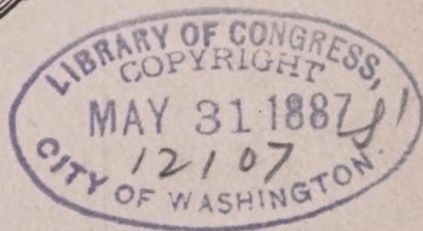
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TICKNOR & COMPANY, BOSTON.

THE CRUISE OF A WOMAN HATER.

THE
CRUISE OF A WOMAN HATER

BY
G. DE MONTAUBAN *psued*
Wm. Parker Greenough



BOSTON
TICKNOR AND COMPANY
1887

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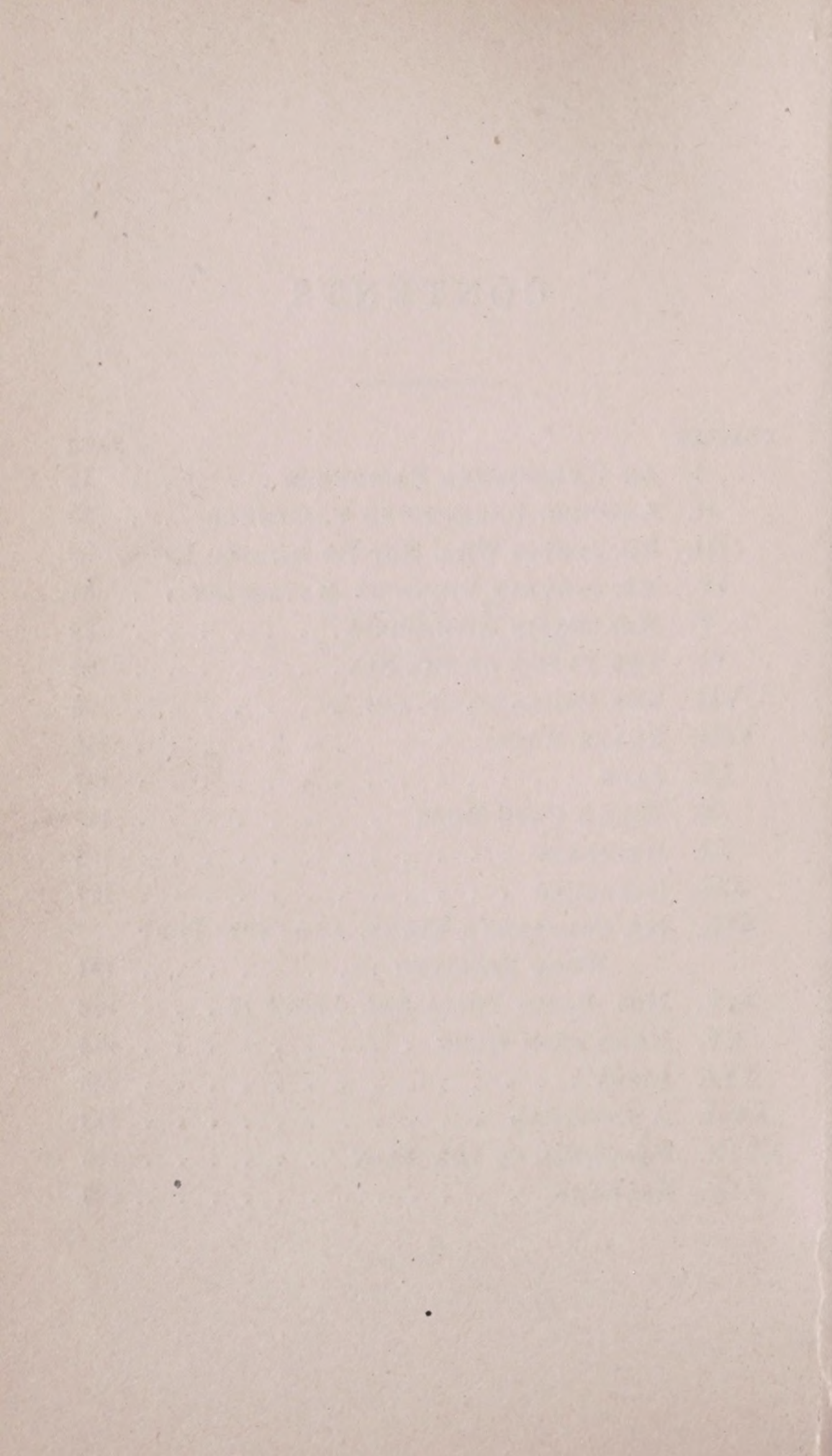
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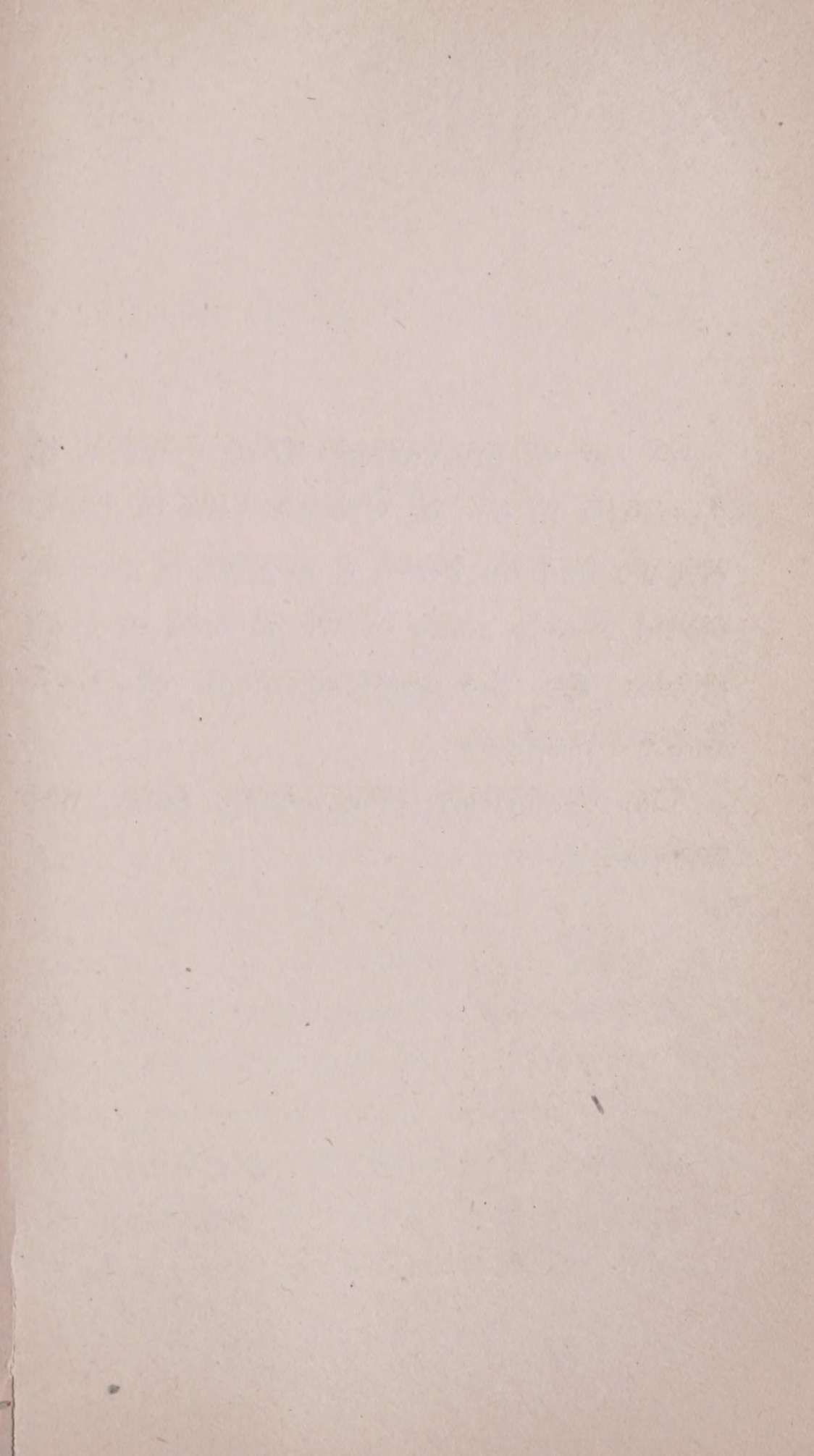
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ELECTROTYPED
BY C. J. PETERS AND SON, BOSTON.

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ON one of my voyages from London to Australia in one of Green's Line of packets, we had on board a number of professional people, some of whom told or read stories for the entertainment of their fellow-passengers.

The American clergyman's story was entitled, —

THE
CRUISE OF A WOMAN HATER.

CHAPTER I.

AN UNEXPECTED PASSENGER.

ON the 16th November, 187—, the ship *Ajax* was lying in New York harbor ready for sea on a voyage from New York for Honolulu and Hong Kong. The *Ajax* was originally built for a steamer, but her engines, not proving satisfactory, had been taken out, and the hull sold to her present captain, by whom she was converted into a four-masted sailing ship. The captain, having sold her to an English firm, who stipulated that she should be delivered at Hong Kong, was on this 16th November ready to sail for that port, taking his wife

and two children with him, intending to return *via* San Francisco.

I knew Captain Bluson very well, for we had been chums together at college. A nice fellow he was then, and a nice fellow he is to this day. He retired from the sea some few years ago, and in the intervals of business amuses himself in summer among his strawberries and grape-vines, and in winter with solving mathematical puzzles that make my head swim. If his sight had not failed in his youth, the world might have known another astronomer; but for the good of his eyes his father, himself being a shipmaster, sent him to sea.

Wishing his son to know seamanship and sea life from the very bottom, he sent him before the mast. The young seaman took kindly to the profession, going first as a green hand to Calcutta, and after a couple of years, and having from there made some shorter voyages, coming home second mate; three years later he was master.

At thirty-eight, having made several successful voyages, he had married my cousin Carrie, and was father of two as fine boys as could be found. Having no further need to go to sea, he proposed to make this last voyage as much a pleasure excursion as he could, and, having an unusually fine ship, he invited his whole family to join him. His wife, having sailed with him before, was nothing loath, and the boys would have followed their father to the North Pole, if they once heard him say, "Come, boys; come along."

Early on the morning of the 16th, the wife and children were on board, busying themselves in putting things to rights for the voyage, and waiting only the arrival of the captain to set sail.

He meantime had gone to Boston on business connected with the ship. Returning on the Fall River steamer, he met an old school acquaintance, named Bernard Jerves.

After talking over old times, and rehearsing old scenes, and inquiring for old acquaintance, their talk ran to present prospects and intentions.

Jerves was the only son of a rich father, and at school and college had not been one of the model boys. Without being vicious, he was averse to study and full of mischief. If there was a scrape of any kind about, he was sure to be in it ; and, though he was a good batsman and stroke oar of the college boat, and the best tenor in the glee club, and hail-fellow-well-met with more men than any other in the college, he barely took his degree, and was himself rather surprised that he got it at all.

Not knowing just what to do with him, his father sent him to Colorado to look after some mining properties. This he did for a couple of years very well, but the mountain fever took hold of him, and he came back invalided.

When he recovered, having little else to

do, he fell in love with a girl who had not a single quality but good looks to recommend her. These, it is true, she had liberally. To describe her character would require the pen of DeMusset or some other of the modern French writers, who know more about women than Methuselah or King Solomon. But Jerves had eyes only for her beauty, although her vanity and conceit and weak but perverse stupidity were evident enough to almost every one else. She liked Jerves's riches, and freely displayed the elegant presents he was as ready to make as she to accept. But it was not in his disposition to be in other respects a very ardent lover, and few except himself were much surprised when a week before the day fixed for the wedding she ran away with a middle-aged *roué*, who knew how to take advantage of her weaknesses.

Whatever Jerves felt he kept to himself, and merely spent two years in Europe —

the usual resort for such cases. During his wanderings there he fell in with a very charming and sympathetic young widow. So sympathetic was she, indeed, that it was not long before Jerves had made her the confidante of his whole story. So charming did he find her, and so much pleasure did he take in her society, that he asked her to marry him, and was accepted. There were some things about the widow that Jerves could not quite understand, but she was so fascinating, and he so blind by nature as regards women, that they troubled him but little. The wedding was to take place at a small out-of-the-way village in Germany, after which a year or more was to be spent in travel in Egypt. Suddenly, one morning, appeared a short, thick-set, heavily-bearded man, direct, as he said, from the sheep-farms of Australia, who claimed the sympathetic and fascinating *soi-disante* young widow as his wife, and demanded heavy damages from Jerves for

having alienated her affections. There were a good many high words, and tears, and protestations, and some threats, but Jerves at last found his senses, and the sheep farmer and his wife were quite content to accept second-class tickets for Australia in full liquidation. Whether they ever reached there or not Jerves never knew. He went to Egypt and up the Nile alone, but, returning to Cairo, had a fresh attack of fever, from which he recovered at length, but soured and somewhat prematurely aged, and embittered against all women, and firmly resolved to have nothing whatever to do with them. In this condition he returned home, and shortly after his father died.

A rich and idle man, without ambition, he drifted aimlessly about, living mostly alone, at hotels and clubs. He became a thorough *gourmet*, a first-class whist-player, and a sufficiently ignorant patron of the fine arts, in which latter capacity he was

the delight and the victim of no small amount of unrecognized and unappreciated talent. He tried painting for a while, but, though he had a good eye for the picturesque, and could draw moderately well, he had no sense of color, and his pictures pleased only himself, and that not long. From painting he turned to photography, in which he was quite successful. Having provided himself with an expensive apparatus and no end of books and chemicals, he studied and practised the art until he really became quite proficient. He mostly disdained the use of dry plates — which were only just then coming into use, and not as perfect as they now are — and the professional printer, as savoring of laziness, of which, when called by its right name, he had a great abhorrence. About this time a desire for change came over him, and, after long consideration, he resolved to seek out some comparatively unknown country, where he could combine travel and

adventure with sketching and photography, and about which he would write a book that he would illustrate. So he packed up his paints, brushes, instruments, and chemicals, provided himself with guns and fishing tackle, clothing, tents, boots, and blankets, and started off, bound for Alaska.

When Captain Bluson met him on board the steamer, it was not very difficult to induce him to change his destination to China. The ship was good, the season favorable; there was plenty of room; they had been disappointed of another passenger, and except the captain's wife and the stewardess there would be no women. In fact, there was no reason why he should not go, and, for a man with plenty of time on his hands, the long voyage was an attraction.

So the invitation was soon accepted, and, on arrival at New York, he hailed a boat and sent his numerous boxes and packages on board the *Ajax*. The captain

assured him he would find plenty of supplies on board, but Jerves liked to live well when he could, and when, an hour afterwards, he met the captain at the tug that was to take them on board, he brought with him a dray-load of fresh and canned fruits and delicacies that gave the poor steward and stewardess no end of trouble.

All was ready at last, and it was still early in the day when two powerful tugs took the *Ajax* in tow, and, with a fresh, chilly north-west wind blowing, she proceeded down the harbor, her flags flying, sails ready to be loosed, and saluted by the whistles of numberless small crafts, whose masters recognized the *Ajax* and her well known commander.

Having greeted the captain's wife and charming children, who were delighted at having an unexpected passenger, Jerves retired to his cabin to change his shore clothing for some he thought more suitable for the sea, as well as more comfortable,

and to make everything snug, as became an experienced traveller. The saloon of the *Ajax* was large and pleasant, and the state-rooms or cabins opening out of it were more numerous than is now usual when sailing ships are not generally expected to carry passengers. Jerves appropriated two of them, one for his personal use, and one for his photographic instruments, his painting and sketching materials, his books and papers, and the desk on which he already designed to write out a detailed log and history of the voyage, illustrated in a manner and to an extent never before attempted at sea.

He was well busied with these arrangements when the steward announced lunch ready and Sandy Hook in sight. He took a look out and found the captain on the deck, and the pilot at his side, watching the landmarks, and now and then giving a quiet order or a wave of the hand to the trusty and attentive man at the wheel.

Both were too busy with the care of the ship to give much attention to eating. The captain's wife and children were seated under the lee of the house watching the receding spires of the city, and wondering when they should see them again, while the two tugs were puffing away and evidently doing their best to get the great *Ajax* over the bar before the tide should get too low.

Jerves had watched New York and Brooklyn disappear many times before, and the wind was cold, so he went in and ate a hearty lunch alone, drank a half bottle of claret, and returned to his work. Presently he began to hear the creaking of ropes, and then the flapping of sails, and noticed that the puffing of the tugs had ceased. The steward came to know if he had any letters to send back by the pilot. He got on deck in time to see the pilot shake hands with the captain, and go over the side of the ship, and then the tugs

whistled a parting salute, sheered off, and left the noble ship to herself.

He stayed on deck only long enough to give a glance around and to consider how he should begin his journal in a manner appropriate to the starting of a long and perhaps an eventful voyage. He went below to find some paper to write his opening sentences on, but, not coming at any readily, he gave it up, and went on deck again. There did not seem to be any particular occupation for him there, either. The captain was walking about, and paid no attention to him; the first mate was standing watching the man at the wheel and two others vociferously superintending getting sail on the ship.

The captain's wife and children had gone to try to make themselves more comfortable, and were not to be seen; the steward had been too busy to make a fire in the saloon, and Jerves found himself very cold and alone. He walked up and down for a

while, and finally went to his cabin, drew two blankets over himself, and went to sleep in a state of doubt whether the voyage was going to be at all what he had anticipated.

CHAPTER II.

ANOTHER UNEXPECTED PASSENGER.

THE captain had seen the sails set, and was just going to look after the comfort of his family when he heard a number of sharp, impatient whistles, and discovered a small harbor tug astern of the ship. The whistles continuing, and there being no other vessel in sight, he knew they must be intended for him, so he ordered sail to be shortened, till the ship had only steerage way on her, hoisted a flag, and waited.

The tug came up rapidly, and when alongside the captain recognized the expected passenger who had disappointed them, his wife's cousin and dearest friend, Mrs. Helen Bates, wishing and expecting to be taken on board. The swash of the waves and the noise of escaping steam

made conversation from the tug impossible, so the chair in which the captain's wife had been hoisted on board was quickly swung out again, and Mrs. Bates as quickly brought on board the *Ajax*. The captain told her she was too late — they had not expected her — he had taken another passenger in her place — that passenger was a man, and a hater of women, and he had assured him that, except his own wife and the stewardess, there was not a woman on board. She could not be taken — it would make nothing but trouble if she were to go. It would never do — she must really go back to New York. If she had come a day sooner, they would have been delighted, but now it was quite impossible.

By this time they had got into the saloon, and the captain's wife had been summoned, and, in spite of all talking at once and nearly driving Mrs. Bates into a fainting fit, exhausted as she was by cold, hunger, and anxiety lest she should not

overtake the ship, she was at length made to understand the case, and with many tears and lamentations, and in spite of the protests of the captain's wife, she prepared to go back. Going on deck again, however, they found that her baggage had all been put on the ship, and that the tug was gone. Signals were set to call her back, but they were of no use. She had already ventured further to sea than was prudent for such a craft; the wind was freshening, night would soon be coming on, she had once barely escaped being swamped by the rolling of the ship, and her master was too glad to get her head turned towards New York to heed any signals whatever.

There was now no help for it. To Hong Kong, or to the Sandwich Islands, at least, Mrs. Bates must go, whether the captain liked it or not. Except on Jerves's account, he would like it very well. As for his wife, she liked it any way. So sail was ordered to be set again, and in a few min-

utes the *Ajax* was making eight knots an hour on her course.

The captain started for his cabin to consult his wife as to how he could explain the matter to Jerves, and to take — and, what is more, to follow, as he generally did — her advice as to how this awkward piece of business should be managed. But that good woman was before him, for, just as she and Mrs. Bates returned from the deck to the saloon, Jerves stepped out of his room.

Introductions and explanations followed, which, if not agreeable, were the best that could be made, and Jerves submitted himself to the inevitable with the outward grace that very seldom left him, but with an inward determination to make Mrs. Bates's voyage as disagreeable as he could.

At first sight, Mrs. Bates looked like anything but a pleasant addition to the company. She was rather tall, and very thin, she was cold, she was faint with hunger

and fatigue, she was pale, her lips were white, her hair was loose, and appeared to be of a dirty brownish color, and her clothing, wet with spray, hung on her in limp and draggled folds. Jerves noticed only one good point about her: her eyes were large and dark, though the lids were red and swollen, and still wet with tears. She looked ill and feeble, and this, instead of arousing his sympathy, only annoyed him. The idea of adding an invalid woman to their small party was not a pleasant one. Another thing that worried him was that his extra room must be hastily cleared out and made ready for Mrs. Bates's occupation. There was still another room, but the beds had been taken down, and it was filled with small stores, of which his dray-load of delicacies formed no small portion. And so his cameras, and chemicals, and books, and desk, and all his paraphernalia must be moved and stowed away on shelves and in lockers. He felt aggrieved and imposed

upon, and, though he knew the captain was not at fault, he showed his ill-nature so much as to make that gentleman wish it were allowable to dispose of disagreeable passengers by throwing them overboard. As it was not, he went on deck and smoked a pipe to quiet his nerves and allow his wrath to subside.

The captain was in the habit of having dinner late, and by the time it was announced the steward had lighted lamps and a fire, and when Jerves came out of his room again he found the saloon warm and bright and a smoking hot dinner on a neatly laid table, adorned with fruits and flowers. The ladies appeared also, and, though Mrs. Bates said little and was not at ease, Jerves noticed that her voice was soft and not at all unpleasant. The meal passed off fairly well. Jerves even produced a bottle of champagne, and drank to the success of the voyage, but rather because he had thought beforehand that it

would be a very nice and proper thing to do than from any present inclination. The captain took a single glass, and his wife a sip, but Mrs. Bates kept her glass upside down, and said, softly: "I must beg you to excuse me, Mr. Jerves — I never take wine."

After dinner the two men took their cigars on deck, where the captain told Jerves Mrs. Bates's story. His wife had found time to tell him what he had not known before.

Helen Masson was the daughter of a respectable ship-builder in a small eastern city. Her parents were not wealthy, but, as long as wooden ship-building flourished, were able to live in easy comfort, and to give their children the best education the local teachers could afford. To Helen, indeed, the youngest, the baby, the child of their old age, they had given more than this, and, although they had already begun to find themselves straitened for the means,

they had sent her for two years to a celebrated school. The death of her two brothers at Fredericksburg hastened that of her mother, and at nineteen she came home to take care of her father, now completely broken down and poor. She obtained a situation as teacher in one of the schools of the city, and until his death she supported them both out of her meagre salary. At twenty-one she married the son of a banker in a neighboring city, but the marriage was not a happy one. The husband, a gay, pleasure-loving fellow, fell into bad company, drank, gambled, beat and abused her, and finally ran away to avoid arrest for plundering the bank of the money which he had lost and squandered in his pleasures. Too proud to accept help, and without other resources, she tried to support herself and baby by giving music lessons; but spirits and health gave way under the strain. The child was never strong, and she had no means of giving it the care and

nourishment it needed. Fortunately, a relative in the country one day proposed to take it home with her to see what fresh air and country food might do for it, and from that day it grew and thrived. Six months later she learned of the death of her husband, killed in a disreputable house in the West, in a drunken brawl of his own provocation.

Teaching music under such circumstances was weary work, and, as the state of her health and spirits prevented her from giving lessons regularly, her pay was too small for her to procure for herself the food that she needed. Still, she kept on, until one morning she found herself unable to rise from her bed. One of her little scholars, coming for a lesson, and finding her in this condition, ran home and told her mother, who went at once and removed her to her own house, where, with care and nourishing food and kindness, she began to recover her strength.

Just at this time Captain Bluson's wife, having decided to go with her husband to China, wrote to invite her to go with them. She expatiated on the advantages, sea air and good living, plenty of books and music, freedom from care, and no hard work. If she would only give the boys a few lessons, all her expenses would be paid, and she should have a small monthly salary. (There was something of the nature of a pious fraud about this salary, for the pretext of the lessons was only an excuse for its payment. The fraud never troubled Mrs. Bluson's conscience a bit, and I doubt whether the recording angel did not forget to score it against her.)

The offer was tempting, but Mrs. Bates had not strength to accept it. Besides, she had no outfit. The voyage would be long, and through many changes of climate; her scanty clothing was worn and insufficient, and she had no money to buy more. She was compelled to decline, but the effort

cost her so much that she lost all she had gained, and took to her bed, never expecting and scarcely hoping to rise from it again.

Here her kind friend came to her aid. With hopeful words and cheerful voice and offers of ready help she roused her up, and induced her to attempt the voyage. But the days had been going by, the *Ajax* was nearly ready, and there was not much time for preparation. She sent a letter accepting the invitation, but it was not received. (The captain afterwards found it in a package of the ship's vouchers, where it had been left through the carelessness of an office-boy.)

Her friend bought her few remaining articles of furniture at many times their value, and also bought materials and dresses, and added so much from her own ample stores that Mrs. Bates was surprised to find at starting for New York that her one trunk had grown to three, and when

the baggageman put the checks into her hand she insisted it must be a mistake. But no, the trunks were there, bright and new, and all plainly marked with her own name. Her friend's bluff but kind old husband, who suddenly had business in New York, where he had not been before for twenty years, assured her that he knew nothing about it. It might be some of Maria's doings, and therefore must be all right. At any rate, she must keep the checks; there was no time for inquiries, the train was about to start; there were many friends to say good-bye, and he bustled about and went to buy newspapers, and she saw no more of him till the train was going out of the station, when he appeared from the smoking car with a whole armful of books, papers, and flowers that he deposited in her lap. "Maria" had refused to go to the station, and tearful farewells had been said at home; but, just as the train moved off, Mrs. Bates saw her stand-

ing, flushed and red, on a baggage truck, waving her handkerchief and shouting good-byes at the top of her voice.

Everybody remembers the fearful accident at the Milford bridge. Several persons were killed, and many injured. Mrs. Bates saw but little of it, though enough to shake her weak nerves sadly; but her train was delayed, so that when she arrived in New York the *Ajax* had already sailed. Maria Watterson's husband was, however, a man of resources, and, hailing a tug-boat, he offered a liberal price if the ship could be overtaken and Mrs. Bates put on board. (The master earned his money, as we know, and Mr. Watterson walked up and down the dock till the tug came back, when he took the first train for home, leaving the business for which he was supposed to have gone to New York entirely neglected.)

The story told, and the cigars finished, Jerves bade the captain good-night, and went to bed, if not good-natured, at least

less surly than he had been in the afternoon. He was sorry for Mrs. Bates's misfortunes, but wished she were on some other ship, and he grumbled at himself for having been persuaded to relinquish his trip to Alaska. He was sure she would interfere with all his comforts, would monopolize all the nice, shady places when it was hot, and take the best place at the stove when it was cold. She had already deranged his writing desk, and she might be critical about his painting. To be sure, "The Invalid Passenger" would be a good subject for sketches, but he had not confidence enough in his pencil to be certain of representing those eyes. He might get photographs of her, if necessary, he could even take an instantaneous view without her knowledge. But he was sure she would be a nuisance, for all that. So, grumbling and discontented, he went to bed, and nothing troubled him till the breakfast-bell rang.

CHAPTER III.

MR. JERVES WILL NOT BE IMPOSED UPON.

THE next day was cold and rainy. The wind had "hauled round to the eastward," the second mate said. The captain was on deck in his rubber coat, and the men slouched about dripping. Neither of the ladies appeared, and an occasional wail from the children announced that they too were not happy. Jerves sat by the fire and smoked until lunch, when the captain came in and quietly remarked that it was rather a nasty day, and that there was a steamer in sight, probably from the Mediterranean for New York, Jerves speculated on the possibilities of getting on board her, and so back to New York, but, finding she would not pass within three or four miles, gave it up. He had not found smok-

ing and reading French novels entirely satisfactory, although they had formed a good part of his programme for recreation in rainy weather. The captain turned in for a nap, and Jerves, having tried to sleep and given it up, returned to his pipe and his novels, and the afternoon passed as drearily as the morning. The only sign of life was when the rotund stewardess passed to one or the other of the rooms with cups of tea or bowls of broth. The ladies had found no favor with Neptune, and were miserable, and so were the children. The dinner was not much more pleasant than the lunch, but the curried lobster gave Jerves an idea of possibilities of good cheer to come, and, after he had drank a cup of coffee, and smoked one of the captain's choicest cigars, and beaten him at a game of chess, he felt much better, and thought that if Mrs. Bates would continue to be ill, there was a chance of his getting some satisfaction out of the voyage, after all. The

first mate came in, too, and Jerves found him a right jovial fellow, full of fun and anecdotes and of plans for amusement to be set on foot as soon as the ship should "get into better weather."

Two more equally dreary days followed, and the morning of the third was not much better than its predecessors, though the air was softer. About noon the sun came out, the wind went round to the west, and the ship, on nearly an even keel, was making only four or five knots an hour. At lunch the boys came out, and at dinner the ladies were out also. Mrs. Bates was very pale, but her lips were brighter than when she came on board. She spoke but little, and soon retired. Jerves noticed only the luxuriance of her hair.

The next morning the sun rose bright and clear, the air was soft and warm, and the gentle breeze from the westward continued. The captain said they were in the Gulf Stream. After breakfast, Jerves

brought out his note-book, his pencils, and his sketch-book. It was time, he thought, to begin his work in earnest. He wrote a few minutes, and then began a sketch of a sailor seated on a block, splicing a rope. The splice was completed before the sketch was done, and he deferred finishing it to some other time, and decided to finish his novel before writing or drawing any more. Somehow, the time did not seem favorable for much effort. The steward produced from some mysterious quarter two of those deep, capacious, rattan easy-chairs, brought only on ships familiar with East Indian waters ; and presently the captain escorted Mrs. Bates to one of them, tucked her up with rugs and blankets, chatted a few minutes, and left her. Jerves rose, and lifted his hat as she passed him, and asked how she was feeling. She acknowledged the courtesy with a bow, and replied, quietly, "Much better, thank you."

After the captain left her, she sat look-

ing over the water a long time. Jerves wondered whether he ought to speak to her again, and was debating what he should say and how he should say it in a way that would not be impolite, and at the same time would not encourage her to think she was to presume on or expect any attention from him, when he was startled to hear her call him by name. He came near her, and she said in a low voice, sometimes firm, and sometimes tremulous: "Mr. Jerves, I quite understand that my presence on this ship is as unwelcome as it was unexpected to you. I wish once for all to say that I fully release you from any obligation you may feel to treat me with more than the ordinary politeness with which you would treat any passenger on board a ship, if there were a hundred passengers instead of two. I shall endeavor not to interfere with your occupations or amusements, and I ask no consideration on account of my health or my sex. I hope

not to annoy you, and I am certain you will not annoy me."

Now, this was not at all the kind of language Jerves had expected to hear. There was no apology for being on board, no excuses, no call for his sympathy, no demand for his forbearance. Her manner, indeed, almost seemed a trifle haughty. All his carefully prepared sentences were blown to the winds, and he blundered out something about being sure they should not trouble each other, was conscious he had said badly not what he meant to say, and went away forward just as the captain's boys and their mother came chasing each other out of the saloon. He was vexed with himself, vexed with Mrs. Bates, vexed with everybody, and he lighted his pipe, and pretended to go on with his sketching, while the ladies chatted pleasantly and the boys ran about the ship and played with the first mate. He had intended to leave Mrs. Bates alone, and here he was left alone himself.

When lunch was announced, the captain brought in Mrs. Bates, and was in high humor. He chatted about school days with Jerves, and brought a laugh to Mrs. Bates' pale face with a story of some boyish frolic. After lunch he ran races with the boys, and showed them how to tie knots, and played cribbage with his wife, and Jerves looked on and was interested, while Mrs. Bates slept. Somehow, dinner seemed to come quickly, and passed off nicely, and the two men smoked their cigars on deck and walked and talked gayly in the moonlight. Jerves forgot his annoyances, and went to bed and to sleep in a quiet state of mind.

The next day was Sunday. The weather continued fine, but the breeze was stronger, and the *Ajax* was ploughing the water nobly. The captain's wife had stipulated, as usual, for religious services on Sundays, and he had readily agreed. There was a discussion as to whether

they should be held in the saloon or on deck, but the captain settled that, when the weather was suitable, they should be held on deck, as being an aid to the discipline and inspection of the men. Services on the captain's ships, when his wife was on board, were no new thing, and the mates and the men who had sailed with him knew what to expect. At the appointed hour, all but those actually engaged in working the ship came aft in a body, some willingly, some grumbling, but all washed and clean; they were headed by the second mate, who ranged them on each side of the capstan, which served the purpose of a desk. The captain came from the saloon with Mrs. Bates, followed by his wife and the boys. Jerves laid aside his pipe and novel, and joined them. There were books for all who wanted them. The captain read the service prepared for such occasions, and his wife led the re-

sponses. When it came to the hymn, she started it alone, her husband and the second mate followed, and, by the time the third line was reached, Mrs. Bates's voice was heard, low but clear and very sweet. The service proceeded. The first hymn had gone so well that the captain resolved not to shirk the second, as he sometimes did when there were only himself and wife to sing it. By this time Jerves had determined that, if another hymn was sung, Mrs. Bates should know that there was another singer on board besides herself, and when it was announced he joined in with his tenor. It was an old air, he had not sung since he was a child. His voice was good, and seemed to support Mrs. Bates's, and she sang much more strongly than before.

The service over, some of the men went forward, but others lingered about, and directly a little old seaman came to the captain, cap in hand, and, with many

bows and apologies for presuming, asked if the lady would not sing them another song. The captain looked at Mrs. Bates, who, without a word, but with a kindly glance at the old man, rose and sang some sacred words set to the well known tune "Robin Adair." This concluded, the captain said, "That will do for to-day, men," the second mate called out "All forward," the men bowed and went away, Mrs. Bates lay down to rest from her fatigue, and Jerves lighted another pipe and finished his novel.

At lunch, the service of the morning formed the subject of conversation, and the enthusiastic singing of the second mate, and the tidy and respectable appearance of the old seaman, were especially commented on. The afternoon passed pleasantly enough. The captain tried to explain how to take and work out lunar observations, and talked about Stanley's explorations in Africa, and

the Protective Tariff, and sea-bathing. This reminded Jerves that he had partially arranged with the mate to take a douche from the hose, forward, when the men were washing the decks in the morning, instead of his usual dip in the tub. He had heard the captain say to Mrs. Bates that, as soon as she was strong enough to bear it, she must have a salt water bath every day. It was only polite to give an invalid the free use of the ship's bathing-room, and it was possible he might like the douche quite as well.

Dinner on Sundays was an hour earlier than on other days, and all were expected to dress for it when weather permitted. It was one of the captain's ways of showing respect for the day. He, accordingly, on that day, decorated himself with the well preserved uniform coat that he had worn during the short period of his service as commander of a gunboat in the navy, and the ladies appeared in

dresses such as they might have worn at a dinner-party on shore. Jerves was inclined to bring out a dress suit, but finally decided on a new blue one, in which he knew he looked well. The dinner was pleasant, almost festive. The Chinese cook had exerted himself more than usual, and the steward had even prepared a *menu*, that was an extraordinary bit of caligraphy. Coffee and cigars were served on deck, but, hearing the ladies and children at the piano, the gentlemen joined them. The boys sang school songs, and Mrs. Bates some simple melodies. Jerves, being asked to sing, gave *Cujus animam*, to Mrs. Bates's accompaniment, and sang it very well.

Perhaps he sang it too well, for no one cared to sing after him, though Mrs. Bates complimented him highly. The boys wanted her to sing again, but she pleaded fatigue, and Jerves refrained from asking her to sing a duet with him, as he had intended.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. JERVES'S VIEWS ON MATRIMONY.

MONDAY dawned as pleasant as Sunday. Jerves rose early, went forward and took his douche, then had a cup of coffee, dressed leisurely, smoked a cigarette, and was ready for breakfast in excellent condition of body and mind. Afterwards, the carpenter marked out squares for shuffle-board, and produced the pins for ring-quoits. They played partners; the captain and his boys against his wife and Jerves. Mrs. Bates tried the games, but found them too fatiguing for her strength so she sat by and applauded the boy's shots. Jerves thought it a good time for photography, and brought out his camera, and was quite successful. He was afraid Mrs. Bates might object to being photographed, but

she did not mind it at all. She was even quite interested, and told him she had heard of an electric shutter by which views of clouds and waves in motion and such things could be taken. The captain promised to help to make one, and also to contrive a self-levelling apparatus for the camera, that he thought would be a good thing. Jerves made a dark closet of the bathing-room, and took prints from his negatives, and was very busy, so that dinner came before he was aware of it.

At bedtime the captain found the barometer had fallen considerably, and he took another turn on deck, to make sure that everything was snug, made the stewardess put another board on the side of Mrs. Bates's bed, and provide it with extra cushions and pillows to keep her comfortable in case the ship should roll heavily, and warned Jerves to belay all his traps, for he thought they might have some wind before morning. Then he tucked his wife away

snugly, lashed the bedclothes over the boys so they should not be thrown out of their berth, gave orders to be called at midnight, and in five minutes was asleep.

Next morning the ship was under single topsails.

Jerves was up again early, and went forward for his douche, and got that and something to spare, for a wave that came over the bows just then gave him a drenching through everything he had on. He was glad Mrs. Bates was not by to see the figure he cut as he scrambled back along the bulwarks to his room. He wished he had the electric shutter ready so that he could take a good view of those stupendous waves. He thought she would be interested.

Mrs. Bates had been in fear for several hours, but had not been able to get up, on account of the rolling and pitching. She rang her bell for the stewardess, but that personage was sleeping the sleep of those

for whom the mere rolling of a good ship has no terrors. She was so wedged into her berth that she could scarcely move, and, while she was prevented from being rolled about and banged and bruised, she was uncomfortable, and the creaking of the timbers and the howling and shrieking of the wind were fearful to her. It was a great relief when the captain, who had been in to see if his wife and children were comfortable, and had found them chatting merrily, called out as he passed her door: "How are you, Helen? Are you all right?" She answered: "I am here and alive, but is not the wind terrible?" "Just a moderate gale—that is all." "Is there any danger?" "Not the slightest." "But it is awful to be shut in here when there is such dreadful commotion outside."

"Shall I open your door?"

"Oh, yes, please. If I can hear some one speak sometimes, it will seem less like a tomb."

So he hooked her door open, said he would come again by and by, and went away whistling. She had some doubts whether he had not spoken so cheerfully just to quiet her fears, but presently she heard the steward setting the breakfast table, and humming "Robin Adair" softly as he did so, and, feeling reassured, she dropped off to sleep, until wakened by hearing the captain and Jerves at breakfast laughing over the account of the latter's douche. Her door being open, she seemed to be almost one of the party, and could not help laughing herself; hearing which, the captain hailed her and asked her to join them, and Jerves inquired if she would not have a cup of coffee. She declined the former invitation, but accepted the latter, and Jerves made her a fresh one with his patent coffee-pot, and sent the stewardess with it. He was just as much resolved as ever to do nothing to make her voyage pleasant; but to send a cup of coffee to an invalid

was only decent civility. It would be a shame not to do as much as that. Besides, he remembered her kindness in suggesting the electrical shutter. She thanked him courteously, and pronounced the coffee excellent.

Jerves went forward with the captain to direct the carpenter about arranging the self-levelling camera. Mrs. Bates kept her room; the captain's wife brought her sewing and sat within talking distance. The boys came, and little Bobby crawled into bed beside her, and Harry sat on the floor, and she told them stories and riddles. Bobby crowed and pretended to be crushed when the ship rolled one way, and threatened to crowd her out of bed when it rolled the other. Altogether, they had a merry time of it until the gentlemen came in to lunch, and then the gayety continued. Perhaps they were all the more gay for being a little separated but still within hearing. The cabins or state-rooms opened

into the dining-saloon, while the main saloon and captain's rooms were farther aft. The dining-saloon led out to the main deck, but the saloon proper was more directly reached from the after part of the ship by a companionway, the saloon and cabins being built into a half poop raised a few steps from the main deck. The top of this poop or house was the deck in most common use by the passengers and the captain. The saloons were well lighted and ventilated by skylights of stained glass, and the cabins by ports, which could always be opened, except in extremely bad weather.

Mrs. Bates proposed to get up to lunch if the captain would only stop the ship while she was dressing. She thought she should be able to stand either the rolling or pitching, but the "corkscrew movement," when the ship rolled and pitched both together, was too much. She was "a little hungry but not very,"

whereupon Jerves ransacked his stores for a can of boned turkey and some preserves, and made her another cup of coffee, quite forgetting to inquire whether politeness required it or not. She said she was glad there were no bones in the turkey, for she had too many bones already, and they all ached.

The wind lulled a little during the afternoon, but blew harder than before during that night and the next morning, but about noon the sea was quieter again, and the second mate "reckoned they had run out of it." All came out on deck in the afternoon, and Jerves exhibited and illustrated his camera, and in the evening they played whist, and Jerves and the captain's wife got badly beaten by the other two.

The following day was fine, the awnings were spread, and all busied themselves as they liked. Mrs. Bates proposed to commence the children's lessons, but

the captain's wife insisted she was not strong enough yet, and pacified her with some easy crotchet-work, while she herself sewed. Jerves photographed the men at their work, the stewardess, and anything else that came handy. For a picturesque subject, the colored stewardess, in her flaming bandanna, was a good one. There was no need to wedge *her* into her berth in heavy weather. If she would only lie on her back, as it would seem she generally did, she would fit altogether too close to roll much. Her name was supposed to be Cleopatra, but the captain had christened her "Baby," and her husband, the steward, who was about four sizes smaller than herself, was, with equal appropriateness, called "Samson." These two having got into an excited discussion over their work, Jerves slyly turned the camera upon them at a critical moment, and took an instantaneous view that gave rise to infinite mirth. The captain

meanwhile, worked at the self-levelling apparatus, and the boys pitched quoits, though little Bobby was not much higher than the pins themselves.

The after-dinner coffee and cigars were served on deck again, and the captain and Jerves stretched themselves out in the large easy-chairs and talked. Having gone over the most of "the world, and all that therein is," their talk turned, as not seldom happened, to women and matrimony, on which subjects, as may well be imagined, their views differed widely. The captain maintained that a man could never know what happiness was until he had a wife, and Jerves, as usual, claimed that women were the cause of all the trouble in the world, and that the less a man had to do with them, the better.

According to his views, women were responsible for all the wars, pestilences, and famines that ever desolated humanity. All the troubles and all the crimes ever

heard of could be traced, directly or indirectly, to some woman.

“And all the charities and all the good works in the world originate with some other woman.”

“If it were not for women, there would be no need of charities, and scarcely any for good works. If women do anything for charities, it is no more than they ought to do, and indeed no more than they should be compelled to do, so far as they can.”

“Don't they make the best nurses in the world?”

“No, not the best. If a man has a trifling ailment, he may trust to a female doctor, or a female nurse, but as soon as he is very sick he sends for a man.”

“I don't know much about female doctors myself. I reckon there are good ones. Any way, there are thousands of things that women can do vastly better than men.”

“What, for instance? If you want a good cook, you must have a man? if you want your coat well made, it must be sewed by a man; a Chinaman will do up your shirt better than any laundress; and your men keep your decks cleaner than any woman’s kitchen. Even women themselves, if they want their dresses nicely fitted, must go to a tailor. I suppose women are a part of the scheme of creation, but it seems to me the universe might have gone on better under some other arrangement.”

“Perhaps I’m inclined to be modest, but I don’t know that I could run the universe any better than the present authorities. Doubtless, Providence might have contrived a plan to get along without women, but, now that we have them, what would you do with them?”

“In respect to women, I don’t propose to take any share in running the universe, myself. On general principles, I think the Chinese plan is the best one.”

“Drown the surplus?”

“Yes.”

“It is not a very humane one.”

“Why not, if it reduces the aggregate of human suffering?”

“If all the suffering comes through women — doubtless, the more you drown, the better. I shouldn't like to have a hand in it, though. And I don't believe in it.”

“Then adopt the old plan of shutting them all up and educating them alike — and not much — dressing them alike, and not allowing them to have any rank or hold any property. If a man thought he would like to have a wife, let the proper authorities select one of suitable temper and disposition, and give her to him.”

“What if he didn't like her?”

“No matter. He would be just as liable to like one as another.”

“What if she didn't like him, and didn't behave herself?”

“Then he should administer personal

chastisement till she did. I met a man in Sweden once who formulated the whole plan with great detail. He would have one great establishment to which all female children should be sent at four or five years old, and kept until some man wanted a wife, and then one should be taken out for him."

"I think that is a project that has been proposed a great many times."

"Which only shows how much need there is for something of the sort."

"I don't doubt it was a very fine scheme, Jerves, but I don't think it would work. Your friend would have to reorganize human nature itself, before he could reorganize society on his plan."

"So I told him, but he was not the less enthusiastic about it, and thought he should eventually get some community to adopt it."

"I should want to move out of that community at once if I lived in it."

At this stage the captain's wife, who had for some time thought the gentlemen had smoked and talked long enough, and who was anxious to have her revenge at the whist table, started to interrupt them — taking Mrs. Bates with her. They reached the door, but, as the conversation still went on, they stopped and listened, standing with their arms about each other's waists, while the captain and Jerves, whose backs were turned to them, went on.

“No,” said the captain; “there are a good many quite irresistible influences that your friend did not take into his account.”

“I presume there are,” said Jerves.

“To start with, I don't think I should like to have somebody else select a wife for me. I think I could do it decidedly better myself.”

His wife gave Mrs. Bates a squeeze that nearly took her breath away.

“You are one of the lucky ones. There

are not many who are so fortunate, or who make so good a selection as you."

"That is so. All the authorities of all the establishments that ever existed couldn't have chosen me a better wife — though I say it. I hope I am sufficiently thankful."

Mrs. Bates felt her friend tremble and try to get away, but she held on and drew her more closely to herself, put a hand over her mouth, and kissed her softly, while Jerves continued.

"Truly, captain, you have abundant reason, but you must confess there are very few so lucky. Your wife is an exception. There may be a good many more like her, but I don't think it."

"Thank you. I like to have people think well of her, but I didn't know you had so good an opinion of her as that. It is lucky she don't hear you."

"Wouldn't it conduce to family discipline? Never mind; I won't say it to her face."

"Please don't," laughed the captain.

If he had not been more attentive to the striking of eight bells and the cry of "All's well" than to anything else just then, he might have heard a good deal of smothered laughter and something of a scrimmage behind him. But Jerves went on: "You must admit that, with their whims, caprices, vanity, extravagance, faithlessness, dishonesty, and all that, the great majority of women make most wretched wives. I don't understand how men get along with them as well as they do. For my part, I don't want anything to do with them. I will treat them respectfully and politely when they come in my way, but that is all."

"Don't be too certain. In spite of your unfortunate experience, you may change your mind and marry one of them yet. Because one woman is a fool and another an adventuress, it don't prove the whole sex to be such. There are lots of good women in the world, and it is quite on the

cards that you may hit on as great a treasure as you make out my wife to be ; and, if you do, I hope you'll marry her."

"No, sir, thank you, not I—not if the Queen of Sheba were to come on her bended knees and ask me. I settled that point some time ago. I don't blame women for marrying when they can. They are brought up to work for it and scheme for it, and they generally have something to gain by it, but nine men out of every ten make nothing but absolute fools of themselves by marrying. You didn't, as it happened."

Mrs. Bates could stand this kind of talk no longer. There were tears in her eyes, but her voice was firm as she broke in: "And ninety-nine women out of every hundred make themselves ten thousand times fools by marrying. Why girls should join themselves for life to creatures so utterly brutal, selfish, and treacherous as the great majority of men, almost passes comprehension. They promise to love, and

find nothing that it is possible to love; to honor, and find nothing they can honor; to obey, and find obedience an abomination. What wonder is it that women should be false when they find themselves so cheated!"

"Oh, Helen, you are too harsh; you don't mean all that"—and the captain's wife drew the lofty head down to her shoulder, and gently patted the wet cheek.

"Perhaps I am harsh, but I have good reason. If girls would be content to be girls, and never aspire to be women, they would be far happier."

"Maybe they would," said the captain; "in fact, I am sure they would after a while: for, if we could keep the men and the women apart for a couple of hundred years or so, the millennium would come. But we can't do it, so now let's go and have some whist. Jerves and I have talked nonsense long enough."

"I can tell you I don't want any millenium on your terms. I would rather have

my good man and let the world remain as it is," said his wife, as she drew a strong arm about her waist and took a brown hand in hers and kissed it.

And so they went into the saloon, but there was no whist. Mrs. Bates was fatigued and excited, and Jerves thought he should feel the better for another pipe. Both were conscious that they had said more than they intended, and more than they believed. She lay awake awhile trying to justify herself for using so strong language, and recalling the sorrowful experiences of her own married life. They were sad enough, certainly; but then she thought of the captain and his wife, and of her kind friend Maria Watterson and her husband, and of her own father and mother, and of many others; and she failed to find so many instances of entire unhappiness in married life as even she had thought. Some couples she could think of who did not seem well suited to each other; but—perhaps they

were satisfied — she did not know. At last she fell asleep.

Jerves's reflections did not trouble him so long. He thought he had spoken well, and, if he had abused women more than they deserved, it did not much matter, though he was sorry he had hurt Mrs. Bates's feelings. What he said was near enough to the truth, any way. Indeed, he remembered Mrs. Bates's words, and the fire and spirit with which she had spoken them, much more clearly than he did his own.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. BATES APOLOGIZES.

WHEN he returned from his douche the next morning, he noticed Mrs. Bates sitting on the top of the saloon. It was too early for her, he thought; she should not be there, the dampness was not gone out of the air, and the decks were wet. It was not prudent for an invalid. He dressed quickly and went out with a cup of coffee to her. She declined coffee so early in the morning, so he brought her a bowl of beef-tea which she drank with a relish. This again was only reasonable politeness. He got a rug and made her put it around her and under her feet, and they watched the sunrise. Suddenly she said, "Mr. Jerves, I am afraid I spoke too strongly last night. Men are

not all so bad as I represented them. I know many—yes, very many, husbands who are good and kind and faithful, and their wives are happy women. I ask your pardon. Your abuse of women angered and excited me. All do not deserve it. There may be some who do. You were cruel and unreasonable, but, all the same, I was unjust also. My own married life was unhappy—perhaps you know it; but all women are not so unfortunate as I. But you spoke shamefully of us. You would condemn your own mother. You were not gentlemanly; you were not even manly.”

She had commenced very quietly, and Jerves thought she was going to be quite gracious and humble, and he was glad he had not withdrawn anything he had said. But, when she accused him of being cruel and unmanly, he was angry, for he could not help admitting to himself she was right. However, he was not going to be put down.

“I spoke of women as I know them — that is, most of them. Of course, all are not like that. I see a great many who, I think, are not at all like it.” That was taking back a little too much; so he added: “But I have seen very many who seemed to me just like it — quite as bad as I represented them.”

He felt rather ashamed of himself, but could not make up his mind to be so fairly open and generous as she, and ask to be forgiven for his outrageous expressions.

“I will confess my language was too sweeping. The current of my talk carried me too far. You could not think I would include such women as the captain’s wife and yourself in any such remarks.”

“Please do not mention me, Mr. Jerves; you do not know whether I ought to be included or not,” interposed Mrs. Bates. She ought not to have added these last words, for they gave him a chance to say that until he knew her more he certainly should

not include her in his condemnation of the sex. She laughed quite heartily, and said : “ Well, if I withdraw my extravagant and unfair language, and you exclude from condemnation all who do not deserve it, I don’t see but justice will be done all round, and the world go on as before.”

He was tempted to say that he condemned all whom he did not know or believe to deserve to be excluded, but, on the whole, thought he would not be quite so ungracious, and so they went to breakfast, she as calm and stately as ever, and he still bitter and rather angrily pulling his moustache.

At breakfast the captain chaffed Jerves about his friend’s project, and made him explain it to the ladies, who had not heard that part of the conversation. Jerves explained it in all its details.

“ Why, the man was simply a lunatic — that is all,” said the captain’s wife.

“ Now, Jerves,” said the captain, “ I be-

lieve the whole thing is an invention of your own, got up to give us something to talk about."

"Not at all. The author of the scheme was a philosopher, and something of a statesman, a scholar, and what is more, captain, a mathematician — which shows that *I* had nothing to do with it."

"No wonder, then, he got mixed up. He had probably studied so much he had no sense left."

"He was only a bit moon-struck," coolly remarked Mrs. Bates; "probably some girl had jilted him."

"And well he deserved it — the silly old thing," put in the captain's wife.

"He should have been given the first wife out of the *establishment*," remarked the captain.

"And the young girls should have had the selection of her," added Mrs. Bates.

"For a suitable match they would have had to give him an idiot; and, as idiots are

not allowed to marry, I am afraid the poor man would have had to remain single to the end of his days," said the captain.

And so it appeared that the project of the man they persisted in designating as "Jerves's friend" found no favor in that company, though this was not by any means the last Jerves heard of the scheme. Then they dispersed to their various avocations, the captain and Mrs. Bates to arranging the battery for the electric shutter, his wife to her sewing, Harry to a story-book, and little Bobby superintending the whole.

Jerves made an excellent sketch of the old sailor who had asked for another song, and Mrs. Bates admired it much, and asked permission to make a copy in water-color. Jerves consented, of course, wondering whether she could paint better than he could. She said she had a box of colors somewhere, if she could only find it; but Jerves insisted on bringing out his complete outfit of colors, and she soon made a very ef-

fective picture of it. Then she made a couple of sketches of sea and clouds. She could paint the skies and water and atmospheric effects better than he, while he excelled in figures and detailed drawings. She proposed to make a sketch or two for herself every day, so that the series should form a history of the voyage and illustrate her diary. This prompted him to mention his original plan of an illustrated log-book, and she quite approved of it. He confessed he had done nothing about it yet, and she recommended him to begin at once, and even offered to supply notes from her own journal, which she had kept to read to her little scholars when she should go back to teaching again. At noon the captain allowed him to take an observation, and he worked it up correctly, and made out the ship's run within five miles of the mate's, which pleased him greatly. In the afternoon he took Mrs. Bates's journal and wrote up several pages, and inserted some

sketches and photographs, and made quite a good beginning. Mrs. Bates ignored their little dispute, and her manner was quite what it had been. They were neither more nor less intimate than they had been three days before. It is likely he would almost have forgotten it, if the captain had not stirred the whole affair up by more of his chaffing as Jerves and Mrs. Bates were at work with their paints.

“Just look at him now, Carrie. No one would suppose such a pleasant, amiable, harmless-looking young man as that could be so savage as to abuse women as he did last night.”

“And, Mrs. Bluson, would any one imagine that an experienced mariner and man of family, who had received such a rating as his whole sex got, would ever wish to refer to the incident again?” retorted Jerves.

“Now, captain,” said Mrs. Bates, “will you please let that matter drop? Mr.

Jerves and I mutually made *amendes honorables* this morning, before breakfast, and there is nothing more to be said."

"Did you both withdraw all your unhandsome remarks?"

"Not quite, but we agreed to withdraw all that was not true, and that all that was true should remain as true as ever it was."

"Very kind and generous of you, I am sure. Nobody could expect anything more than that—from a woman. But you owe me an apology personally."

"Do I? Then I'll make it now while I am in the mood. If I said anything about Captain Bluson that was not true, I hereby confess that it was entirely false and erroneous."

"Thank you. I don't think I ever heard a handsomer apology. It is quite sufficient."

"Now I think, to make everything

square, Mr. Jerves owes me an apology," said the captain's wife.

"Well, no, Carrie," answered Mrs. Bates. "On the whole, I don't think he does. If I were you, I don't think I would ask one."

Jerves never could tell what it was amused those two ladies so much, but he said he would not be outdone by Mrs. Bates, and, if he had said anything about Mrs. Bluson that was untrue, her husband should apologize.

So Jerves's good-humor was quite restored, and the day, that had begun with such signs of a storm, proved the pleasantest he had had. After dinner, when the crew were dancing and singing and skylarking, he went forward and sang and told anecdotes, and made himself a prime favorite. He had a bout with the boxing gloves with the third mate, and, finding he could more than hold his own, he allowed himself to be

slightly beaten for the sake of that officer's reputation with the crew. The captain thanked him for his consideration. A little music in the saloon closed the day.

Saturday was pleasant again, and everybody was occupied. Mrs. Bates made two more sketches, and afterwards translated a little German story to amuse the children. She was never idle. Then Sunday came again, and there were services and singing as before, and a good deal more singing after the service.

They had now been out nearly two weeks, and already the captain's wife noticed the improvement in her friend's health, and rejoiced at it. The color had begun to come back to her cheeks, and she could walk about the decks freely; her voice was stronger, her eyes were brighter, and the signs of pain and weakness about her mouth were lessening. Harry and Bobby simply adored her, and

were her devoted servants and watchdogs. Next to a romp with their father, they enjoyed sitting by her side while she read them stories and sang childish songs.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PERILS OF THE SEA.

MONDAY morning bad weather came on, and soon became a gale that lasted three days. On the second, the ship was hove to. Nothing could be done out-of-doors. A few moments of sunlight gave Jerves a chance to photograph the sea, when the wind tore off the crests of the waves, and seemed to flatten them down; but most of the time the rain poured heavily. It was a time of discomfort, but borne with patience. They had become accustomed to the howling of the wind, and the creaking of timbers, and were not alarmed. Thursday the wind died away to a dead calm. The rolling of the ship on the swell was more wearing and tedious than the gale, and all

were glad when a light breeze sprang up. At sunset all were on deck watching the clouds, when one of the lookout men reported something in sight. As they came nearer, it proved to be a wreck with the stump of one mast only standing. It soon became too dark to distinguish more. Orders were given to stand by and wait for daylight, and lights were burned occasionally to let those on board, if any there were, know that they were not abandoned. The *Ajax's* passengers slept but little, and not a soul on board of her but was on deck with the first glimmer of daylight. As soon as the wreck could be sighted, sail was made for it, but the air was light and ahead. "There's some life on board, Mr. Rollins; there's a distress signal flying."

"Yes, sir," replied the first mate, "but I reckon not much. The wreckage is alongside, you see, sir. They would have

cut it away if they could. It's a wonder it hasn't punched a hole in her before this."

"I see one person on board," exclaimed the captain. And presently the mate added, "I think it's a woman, sir, and I don't see any others."

Another half-hour of silent watching and no further sign of life on the wreck. The cook was ordered to give the men their breakfasts early, and the passengers hurriedly ate whatever they could get hold of first. The captain called Mr. Rollins to the deck and quietly gave his directions. There was no excitement except among the passengers.

"Is the quarter boat all ready, Mr. Bows?"

"All ready, sir."

"Swing her out, and tell off your men."

"Ay, ay, sir," and the boatswain's whistle was heard, and the boat quickly hung at the davits. Another whistle, and

the boat's crew was on board, with Rollins in the stern. Jerves exchanged a hurried word with him, and both looked at the captain, who answered the look with a nod, and Jerves took a place beside the mate. The ship came slowly up into the wind, the orders "Lower away" and "Let fall" were soon given, and the boat was away to the wreck.

It was not a very long pull; and in half an hour the boat was within a quarter of a mile of the wreck, and to leeward of it. When they came quite near, the mate bethought himself and suddenly steered away to make a long sweep round to windward, muttering to himself as he did so, "Looks to me like a case of Yellow Jack," and he set his teeth together, and his eyebrows came down, and the good-natured face grew hard. The change of direction surprised the boat's crew, and they looked about, and their strokes were irregular till a quick, sharp "What are you doing, there?"

Steady, all!" recalled them to their duty. Coming nearer, they saw no one on board but the woman, who swung her arms about, and tried to hail them but could not. They found the wreck to be that of a German bark, main and mizzen masts gone overboard, and floating, with sails all set, alongside. "You had better not come aboard," said Rollins; "very likely, there's yellow fever on board." "Go ahead," was all Jerves's answer.

It was difficult to get on board for the wreckage, but running under the bowsprit they found a rope hanging, by which Jerves and the mate hauled themselves up, hand over hand. Telling the crew to back off two ship's-lengths and wait, they descended to the deck.

The sight on deck was a fearful one. Three dead bodies were lying about, and in the forecastle they found two men alive, of whom one was delirious. The decks were encumbered with fallen spars and rigging,

the galley was overthrown, and with water-butts and all the movable deck-hamper lying about in what seemed inextricable confusion. Going aft, they met the captain's wife trying to drag the almost lifeless body of her husband out of the cabin. Seeing a boat coming, the poor woman had thought they were to be taken off the wreck at once. Jerves could speak some German, but could make but little of her incoherent talk. He managed to understand, however, that the bark was from the West Indies, with a cargo of sugar; that, when two days out, one of the men was taken sick, and, two days after, two more. These all died, and their bodies were thrown overboard. The next day, the first mate was taken sick, and died in a few hours, and the same night the second mate and four others had stolen a boat and run away. After that, the captain fell sick, and for three days his wife and the two men left alive had worked the ship, trying to steer

north as well as they could, and hoping to fall in with some vessel. The two men had been sick, but were recovering until hurt by falling spars in the gale of the day before, which had dismasted the bark.

The mate of the *Ajax* had not waited to hear all this, but, as soon as he learned enough of the facts, called the boat's crew within talking distance, and gave them orders to report what he had learned to the captain, and ask for further instructions. He tried the pumps, and, finding no water, told them to report that the bark appeared to be tight. The woman cried, and begged piteously that she and her husband might be taken off. Mr. Rollins would neither take her, nor go himself, nor let Jerves go, nor indeed did Jerves propose going. Both knew perfectly well the danger they were in, but had no intention of carrying yellow fever from the infected vessel to the *Ajax*.

The boat gone, both set to work and made the captain of the bark as comforta-

ble as they could, and after him the two men, of whom one had an arm and two ribs broken, and the other a bruise on the head. Though slightly delirious, he appeared to be recovering from the fever, and not badly hurt. This done, they cut away the fallen masts, which momentarily threatened to stave in the bark's side. They worked and talked together like brave men who had taken their lives in their hands. The captain was quiet; whether alive or dead, they did not know. His wife was bathing his face and moaning. Jerves watched her and remembered the hard things he had said about women a few nights ago.

Presently the mate saw a manœuvre on board the *Ajax* that told him at once the captain's intentions. He saw a larger boat swung out, and a heavy hawser handed into it.

"You and I are to have a heavy job, Mr. Jerves," he said.

“What is it?”

“We are to take care of these sick people, and steer this ship into Bermuda.”

“How do you know all that?”

“Do you see that hawser? It means that we are to be taken in tow. The *Ajax* will neither have yellow fever taken on board nor abandoned in mid-ocean. We are within three or four days' sail of Bermuda, and you or I will not go on board the *Ajax* again till we get there.”

“Does the captain expect us two to nurse these sick and steer the bark also?”

“Certainly, if necessary. And quite right he is. Here are six of us living. If he took us on board, we should be liable to carry infection to the whole ship's company. Once we get to Bermuda, he will hand the bark over to the proper authorities, and, with a little extra precaution, you and I will be all right. It is hard lines on a passenger, I admit, but for me it is only in the way of my duty.”

“And, now that I am here, it is in the way of my duty also. Say what you want done, and depend on me to the best of my ability. I’m not a seaman, but I’ll do what I can.”

“That’s the talk. The captain will send us food, and medicines, and disinfectants. We will do the best we know how. I’ve been through yellow fever twice myself. It is barely possible he may send us a man or two. He won’t unless they volunteer, so long as we can do the work ourselves.”

“All right. I’m with you.”

They spread pieces of torn sails over the captain and his wife and the two men. Jerves made some splints with an axe, and tore up a pillow-case for bandages, and set the broken arm. He had been too much of an athlete at college not to have seen broken arms and ribs before. The man with the bruised head seemed to be coming round all right, but was very weak. All the cooked provisions had been washed

overboard. They opened the cabin windows and let the air through.

The *Ajax* had all this time been working up to windward of the bark. As she passed astern, the small boat came off again, bringing supplies of canned and freshly cooked provisions, disinfectants, and medicines, and the book of directions usually carried on board vessels.

After the ship had worked up as near as was prudent, a boat came off with a hawser, as the mate had foreseen. One man also came, a negro, so seasoned in the cane-swamps of Cuba as to be fever-proof. The message from the captain was that he should not send any more help unless they called for it. There was no need to say more; Mr. Rollins knew his duty, and could be trusted to do it. In a short time the bark was in tow of the ship, and headed for Bermuda, the mate, Jerves, and the negro taking two-hour tricks at the wheel. A light line was also rigged, by

which letters or small articles could be sent from one vessel to the other in case of need. They made the negro bring the bedding from cabin and forecastle and throw it overboard. Then they closed all the doors and windows and fumigated both places thoroughly. The captain and his wife slept, one from the exhaustion of the fever, the other worn out with fatigue and watching. All the sick were well sheltered with the torn sails.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BRUNA.

ON board the ship, little was done but watch the bark and wonder what was being done on board. After the excitement of the morning, all were very quiet. The day wore on and so did the night, and then two more days and nights. The wind continued light, and slow progress was made. The mate got some small sails on the stumps of the masts. They might be of service in case bad weather should come on, so that the bark had to be cast off. The captain sent a message of approval, and directions what to do in case he should signal them to let go. On the fourth day, about noon, the lookout reported another wreck on the starboard bow. With the glass she was seen to be

a large British steamer, masts and part of her smoke-stack gone, and rudder disabled. So much could be discerned as she rolled in the trough of the sea. As she showed signals of distress, the *Ajax* bore down towards her, shortened sail, and waited for a boat that was seen coming. Presently her first officer came on board and reported her to be the *Bruna*, from Glasgow for New Orleans. She had been damaged in the same gale as the bark, and had lost masts, rudder, all spare spars, and all boats but one. Such temporary rudder as they could arrange had also been carried away, and they were now trying to steer her by means of chains hung over the stern, of which they had not enough for the purpose. Her engines were in good condition. Seeing the *Ajax* towing a dismantled bark, the steamer's captain had thought the *Ajax* might be glad to get rid of her, and proposed to take her in tow himself, thus using her as a rudder by which to steer

his own vessel to New Orleans. The *Ajax*, however, having towed her so far, was not inclined to give her up so readily. The bark and cargo were valuable, and if incidentally to saving the lives the property also were saved, there might be a good bit of salvage to be earned. So the captain would not give her up. The officer then proposed to tow both vessels to Savannah, but to this the captain of the *Ajax* would not agree either. He was within two days' sail of Bermuda where he could properly leave the bark and her sick. Weather permitting, the steamer might tow both to Bermuda, but to Savannah the *Ajax* should not go.

This arrangement passed the officer's powers to conclude, and he returned to the steamer for instructions, but quickly came back with a proposal to purchase the bark from the *Ajax*, but, the captain of the bark being still alive and nominally in command, the proposition was promptly

rejected. The officer then had the hardihood to suggest that the captain of the bark was not in a condition to make any objection to a transfer, and that his wishes need not be consulted. The only answer to this was the alternative of leaving the ship instantly or being thrown overboard, and "Square away, Mr. Bows," came from the quarter-deck in a tone of voice that Mr. Bows rather liked to hear once in a while, but not too often. Mr. Bows was a good seaman, but he had his faults, and once or twice in his life he had heard that tone of voice when he did not like it at all. Just now he knew it only meant prompt obedience, and woe to the laggard, and that suited him precisely.

The yards were braced round before the officer was fairly over the side of the ship. and his painter cast off before he was in his seat. The discomfited officer rowed away a short distance, when an idea seemed to strike him, and, after a short colloquy

with one of his men, he turned and rowed towards the bark.

Coming alongside, he sprang into the main chains and up on the rail, but as he was stepping on deck he found himself confronted by Mr. Rollins, with a belaying-pin in his hand, and forbidden to come further.

“Are you master of this bark?” demanded the intruder.

“I am in charge of her at present. What do you want?”

“I want to tow her to Savannah.”

“The bark is already in tow, as you know very well.”

“I am first officer of yonder steamer. We have lost our rudder and want the bark to steer us. I’ll tow you to Savannah and give you £100.”

“And I am first officer of yonder ship, and I have picked up the bark in distress, and I propose to keep her.”

“Then, if you are not her captain, I

have nothing to do with you. I want to see her captain," and he made a movement to come on deck. "Stop, there," cried Rollins. "If I am not captain, I am master. Stop where you are."

"I tell you I want to see the captain. Get out of my way."

"I am all the captain you will see. You have no business here. Get off this ship."

"I'll get off when I am ordered by the captain. I'm not taking orders from you. I am going to see the captain."

"You'll not see the captain, and you will take my orders. Get off this ship quick, if you know what is best for you."

Now the officer, who had at first pretended to take Rollins for the captain of the bark, knew his rights perfectly well, and had no intention of openly exceeding them, or of resorting to force. He had secretly arranged another project, and all his talk was only to give time for it to be carried out. While he was engaged with Rollins,

one of his men had climbed on board by the fore-chains, and attempted, unperceived, to cast off the tow-line. The three vessels were quite near together, and his plan was to get the bark loose from the ship, and, before the *Ajax* could be got round to pick her up again, he would get another line to his own vessel, and make off with his tow faster than the ship could follow. It was a bold project, and a dangerous one, but he thought he could not be proved to have had any hand in getting the bark loose, and, once loose, it would be hard to say he had not as good a right to pick her up as the *Ajax*. All he had done was to say to one of his men, "Now if that hawser should happen to part, we might pick up the bark ourselves," knowing his man would understand him. He might even claim the loosening of the hawser to have been an accident. At any rate, the weather was threatening, the steamer was in some danger of founder-

ing, and he knew his captain to be daring and not scrupulous. He would run some risks, though he would take care to make them as light as he could.

The negro was at the wheel, and Jerves was taking his "watch below" in the form of a nap on a plank, with his head on a tackle block for a pillow, when he was roused by the voice of Rollins. Rising quickly, he saw a strange man at work at the hawser. Rushing forward, he was just in time to prevent the last bight from being thrown off. Dealing the fellow a blow that broke his jaw and sent him reeling and stunned against the bulwarks, he secured the hawser again in an instant, and then seized the man and pinioned his arms round the windlass before he had fairly recovered his senses.

Hearing the noise, two more men came from the boat. With a hand-spike Rollins laid one of them senseless as soon as his feet touched the deck, and aimed another

blow at the second, who, in dodging it, missed his footing, and, falling overboard, striking the boat as he fell, was with difficulty hauled into the boat by the remaining man.

The officer had jumped to the deck, receiving a blow from Rollins's belaying-pin as he did so, and was running to the help of his men when he happened to think that this might be considered very like *piracy*, and he jumped to the bulwarks to get into his boat, but Rollins had got the same idea and was too quick for him and pulled him back. Then came a struggle, and it might have gone hard with Rollins—for the fellow was now desperate, and making every effort to escape—had not the German captain's wife come up behind and garroted him, which soon brought him down. Besides the man who had fallen and who was considerably hurt, only one man now remained in the boat, which he held to the chains with a boat-hook. Jerves

dealt the handle of the boat-hook a blow with the hand-spike, knocking it from the man's hands. The boat drifted away, extinguishing the last chance of the officer's escape.

All this passed in much less time than it takes to tell it. In fact, not ten minutes had elapsed since the order "Square away" had been given. Nothing of the affray could be seen from the steamer, owing to the high bulwarks of the bark; but to the captain of the *Ajax* it was evident there was some trouble, and he quickly shortened sail again, and sent a boat's crew of six men, under command of the third mate. Mr. Bows heartily cursed his luck at being second mate this voyage instead of third. It is likely he would have changed places with any man in the ship for the chance of being where there was a prospect of a fight.

They found Mr. Rollins and Jerves in possession of the bark, two men bound, one

to the windlass, and one to the stump of the foremast, and the first officer gloomily walking the deck. The fight was all over, so that Bows would have had no pleasure at all. Two men were left on board, and the three prisoners were promptly transferred to the *Ajax*, where it was some satisfaction to Bows to put them all in irons.

By this time the boat with the two men had reached the steamer, and explained the condition of affairs. The position of the steamer was now serious. Night was soon coming on, the barometer falling, the first officer and two men gone, and another badly hurt. They had not succeeded in arranging any efficient steering apparatus, and, if a gale came up, the steamer would almost certainly founder. If she could be helped, this was not a time to make terms or conditions. Another officer was accordingly sent to the *Ajax* to see what could be done, with orders to agree to anything that was likely to save the ship.

The Scotch captain, who a couple of hours, ago would have quibbled on a £10 note in payment for a few spars from the *Ajax*, which might have made him a rudder, and who would have consented to run away with the bark rather than pay it, was now in a situation where he must pay thousands, or risk the loss of ship, cargo, and lives. Captain Bluson was not in a good humor to treat with, as may well be supposed, and as the steamer's officer soon discovered. Three propositions were laid before him, either to abandon the steamer, bringing all hands on board the *Ajax*, to be landed at Bermuda; to take the ship and bark in tow to Bermuda, and either pay £2000, or else, on arrival at Bermuda, have the case brought before the admiralty court, it being previously agreed that the salvage should be considered as from total loss of the steamer.

The second proposition was accepted. To pay £2000 for the privilege of towing

two vessels two days was certainly aggravating, but less so than either of the other proposals, and the captain of the steamer knew there were serious and complicated questions of insurance involved, and that the captain of the *Ajax* was taking a considerable risk. So, while he cursed him out of one side of his mouth, he complimented him out of the other.

As to the officer and two men very little was said. A mild suggestion as to their release brought out such an expression of opinion from Captain Bluson that the officer was glad to drop the subject. It was quite evident there was nothing for them but to be taken in irons to Bermuda, there to stand their trial, perhaps for attempt at piracy.

With spare spars from the *Ajax*, the steamer having lost all hers, a drag was hastily constructed by which the steamer could be held head to the wind if it should blow too hard for her to hold on

to the ship, which in that case would lie by until good weather. Before it was quite dark, both vessels were in tow of the steamer, and steering towards Bermuda, but making slow progress, with the wind ahead. Two more men were sent to the bark, making now six able-bodied men on board her. Rollins had already reported her so thoroughly cleansed and fumigated that there was no further danger from fever.

During the night the wind and sea increased, until, a little after midnight, hawsers had to be cast off, and the steamer lay to, by aid of the drag. The others also lay to, but the *Ajax* held on to the bark. At times the rain fell heavily, and it was an anxious night. The following day was little better, but towards evening they were able to get hawsers on board again. Another day and another night passed, with moderate winds and fair progress. On the after-

noon of the third day, the white shores of Bermuda rose to sight, a pilot came off, and before morning all were safely anchored in the harbor of Hamilton.

The *Ajax* anchored a little ahead of the others, and was the first to receive visits from custom-house officers, health officers, police officers, and the whole host of officials of the port. The captain was allowed to go on shore, which he did, and called on judges and lawyers and consuls and merchants, the result being the transfer of the bark to the admiralty courts, and the prisoners to the civil authorities. This accomplished, permission to land was given to all, and, on the representation of the captain, quarantine was not enforced against Rollins and the others on the bark who had gone from the *Ajax*. The German captain and his wife and men were sent to the hospital. Rollins and Jerves were not long in getting on board the ship when, after

bathing, changing their clothes, and throwing their old ones overboard, they received the greetings and congratulations of their friends. The simple "Well done, well done," of Mrs. Bates to Jerves, as she gave him her hand, seemed to mean something different from the warm words she showered on the mate, words that sent that officer away feeling as if he could go through the whole again for another like reward. Her words to Jerves seemed to say, "You have done a noble thing, that I did not think you capable of. I am glad I was mistaken in you. Please forgive me." All the captain had to say was, "Well, boys, you have had a hard job, and have done it well. Now, let's go ashore." But the four seamen had to be called up, and, after a very few words of commendation, were given a suit of clothes each, and a day's leave. Part of the crew were also given a day's leave. "Now, see here,

men, I want you to enjoy yourselves, but I don't want you to disgrace the ship. You have done well, and I am satisfied with you, and I don't want to be ashamed of you when you come back," said the captain, as they passed to their boat. Three of them came back sober, which Rollins explained afterwards to Mrs. Bates was more than he expected.

They all then prepared to go ashore, for there were affidavits and depositions to be made, and a vast amount of legal formalities to be gone through. But, before they got started, the captain of the steamer came on board to arrange his affairs, and the two shipmasters' discussion was long, though without bitterness. The steamer's captain was far from being a gentleman, and the two ladies rejoiced that they were not among his passengers; but he was an experienced and capable seaman, and recognized the like qualities in the other. As to the principal object of his coming, how-

ever, the release of his officer and men, he found the captain of the *Ajax* inflexible; they must be dealt with by the law, and, moreover, Captain Bluson would do all he could to bring about a summary trial, before any of the parties or witnesses could get away. The captain of the steamer disclaimed any knowledge of the attempt of his subordinate to get possession of the bark. If he did anything of the kind, he must take the consequences. The captain was too shrewd to make much effort to protect him. He returned to his ship, but afterwards, when the police wanted the two men who had escaped from the bark and returned to the steamer, he took care they should not be found. Spite of that, however, Captain Bluson, through the assistance of the German and American consuls, did bring about a summary trial, for there was no reasonable pretext for delay. Rollins and Jerves spent most of the next day on the witness stand, but

only had the satisfaction of seeing the prisoners sent back to jail, to await trial by a court of higher jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, as soon as the captain of the steamer had left the *Ajax*, the ladies and children went ashore and explored the city, returning loaded with flowers and fruits. The story of the *Ajax* and her two prizes created great excitement in the dull little city, and our passengers received a good deal of attention and many courtesies. They declined all the dinner-parties to which they were invited except one, which they were told it was hardly permissible to refuse.

At last, however, all the legal business was done, the bark transferred to the courts, the salvage money of the steamer paid, each man having his share of it in his pocket, and a prospect of some more when the proceedings as to the bark were concluded. The captain pocketed his share as owner, but for his share as

master he handed a draft to Rollins, saying: "Here, Mr. Rollins, send this to that good old mother of yours with my compliments, and tell her from me that you have behaved only as well as I expected."

"Thank you, captain. That'll do the old lady's heart good. I don't —"

"Come, now, write your letter and get ashore and mail it. I'll have some more letters to go with it.— Mr. Bows!"

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Here's your share of the salvage money, and I'm going to send it to your wife. You've no use for it, and she has."

"That's true, sir. And it's d—d little good it would be to her if I got it between my fingers. They're slippery as h—l, and the hole in the bottom of my pocket's bigger than the one at the top."

"No swearing abaft the mainmast, Mr. Bows."

"I beg your pardon, sir. I forgot where I was. Just let her know if I get out of Bermuda sober, will you, sir?"

“Yes. Call a boat alongside to take Mr. Rollins ashore with the letters, and then heave the anchor short.”

“Ay, ay, sir.”

Mr. Bows wanted to take those letters ashore himself, but was aware that the captain knew better than to send him, and he went forward, whistling:—

“I wish I was in Baltimore,
Hey, storm along —”

“Mr. Jerves, being only a passenger, I suppose you are not entitled to salvage money, and wouldn't care for it if you were; but I'd like to have you accept this, just to remember your life on the bark by,” — and the captain handed Jerves a silver claret jug, with the name of the bark and the latitude and longitude on it.

“Thank you, captain. I suspect I shall hardly need a reminder, but I'll accept this one with pleasure, and, more than that, I will have it filled at once, for I am abominably thirsty.”

“All right, and I’ll help you try it. — Come, Mr. Rollins; boat is waiting.”

In another hour the *Ajax* had weighed anchor and was again on her way to Honolulu.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRADE WINDS.

OFFICERS and passengers were too much exhausted by the labors and excitements of the last two weeks to be very lively, and for several days little was done but eat, sleep, and relate experiences. At the end of a week, however, the old routine was resumed, Jerves's camera re-appeared, also his books and drawing materials, and, most important of all, his neglected journal. There was now plenty of material for it. Mrs. Bates's pen had not been idle, for aside from her own diary she had written a complete account of the late incidents, from which Jerves might select what he chose. She had made water-color sketches of bark and steamer, and whatever she had seen of interest. Jerves was greatly surprised, and

set vigorously to work to make pen and pencil sketches of the deck of the bark as he first saw it, the German captain's wife dragging her husband from the cabin, the injured men and many other scenes that had impressed themselves on his memory. There was no lack of subjects, and the journal grew rapidly.

As they sat quietly interested in their work, Mrs. Bluson asked Jerves if the sight of the German woman nursing her sick husband had changed his ideas as to the worthlessness and uselessness of women. He replied that at first it had, but that afterwards he found that Rollins's care was just as great, and on the whole more efficient, and that the woman's attentions were quite unnecessary, except as they relieved Rollins of some part of his labor. Mrs. Bates smiled gently, for she had conversed with the German woman and found that although Rollins might have given orders, it was Jerves who paid the most

attention and gave the most care to her husband.

Jerves's views about women were the never-ending subject for the chaff and ridicule of the captain and his good-natured, kind, and affectionate wife. His notions met with a good deal of banter, and were taken to be half pretence and half ignorance, and never treated quite seriously. These two were so well satisfied that matrimony was the only proper, and suitable, and altogether desirable condition for grown men and women, that they wanted everybody to be in it, and though neither of them was a matchmaker in a particular way, they were indefatigable preachers of matrimony in general. Of course very few could expect to find such absolutely perfect husbands and wives as theirs, but there was surely a right and suitable Jack for every Jill, and equally certainly a Jill for every Jack. As for Mrs. Bates (who never joined in these conversations), she

had been deceived in her Jack, and so had got a wrong one, but that did not change the general principle in the least. The world was not perfect, and some mistakes must be expected.

She and Jerves were on nearly the same terms as before. They were fellow-passengers, but besides this, they were members of the same small family. Their occupations and amusements were nearly the same, and there must be necessarily some intimacy, but it was the intimacy of respectful companionship rather than of friends. Jerves had quite forgotten his resolution to make her voyage unpleasant. If he had attempted to put it in practice, it is likely he would have found the unpleasantness on his side. She seemed to have no need of him, while he was frequently appealing to her for assistance or advice, for a song or a translation. He confessed to himself she had not proved the annoyance he expected. He had no

excuse for not being polite to her. On the bark with Rollins he had greatly missed her, and was constantly wondering what she was doing, whether she had noticed this sunset or that effect of clouds, and even whether she would think they were treating the sick captain properly.

The weather was pleasant, and every body was busy. There were three festivals coming, the captain's birthday, crossing the Line, and Christmas — all of which were to be observed in elaborate style. For the birthday, the children were to act the little fairy-tale that Mrs. Bates had translated, Harry being the prince, and Bobby the little princess. Their mother should have been the fairy, but the children said nobody but Helen could do that, “and look just like a fairy too,” said Bobby, whose ideas of fairies were perhaps not very well defined.

The ladies prepared costumes, and had a great deal to do. Then they had to

make dresses for themselves, — thin ones for the tropics, and thick ones for Cape Horn. They had fashion-books of latest styles, and talked about linings, and trimmings, and flounces, till the captain complained that his saloon was nothing but a dress-maker's shop, and that they got his logarithms all mixed up with box-plaitings and frills. He even declared that one day he made the ship out to be somewhere among the Himalaya Mountains, owing to mistaking the number of breadths in a skirt for the sun's declination.

The birthday entertainment was a grand success. Jerves made out a programme that was a perfect wonder of gorgeous illumination. Mrs. Bates was compelled to appear as the fairy, and if she was not one of the ordinarily accepted type, she was graceful enough, and her voice was sweet enough, to make her the children's ideal of a fairy for many years after.

Jerves noticed that the hair, that had looked to him such a dirty brown when she came on board the ship, now had a tinge of gold in it, and the lips that were then so white were now almost crimson. The sunken cheeks were becoming round and full, and where there had then been a line of pain, there was now almost a dimple. He was sure the man who had so abused and then deserted her, must have been a miserable and ungrateful scoundrel, and he wondered how such an unusually sensible woman should have been so deceived as to marry him. He thought of asking the captain, but concluded he would not even show so much interest in her as to inquire about her. Still he wished he knew.

Since the episode of the bark, the first mate had taken a strong liking to Jerves. Though they had been on friendly terms, the mate had looked on Jerves as a pleasant, lazy fellow who cared only to

make himself comfortable, eat good dinners, and occupy himself with trifles that were only one remove from pure idleness. But the readiness with which Jerves had followed him to the deck of the bark, and taken his full share of the labors there, his care of the German captain and his wife, and especially the boldness and promptness with which he had attacked the three seamen, and the presence of mind he had shown in sending their boat adrift, had materially changed his opinion, and he thought there must be a good deal in the fellow after all. They had many a long talk together, walking the deck in the evenings.

It was on one of these occasions (they had been talking of unsuccessful men) that the mate was telling of a friend of his who had lost his ship by collision with an iceberg in a fog, when two of his men were drowned. He had been

thirty-four hours on deck, and had fallen asleep leaning against the rail. Suddenly roused by the cry, "Ice, right ahead," he had called out "Port," when possibly if he had said "Starboard," the berg might have been cleared. Though no one ever blamed him, he was so distressed and disheartened that he would never go to sea again, but went with his wife to live on a barren little farm that hardly gave them a miserable support. "It's an infernal pity," said the mate; "he's a splendid fellow, honest as the sun, and with a heart bigger than an ox. They have no family, only Mrs. Bates's little girl, who lives with them, but I expect they have a confounded hard time of it. Mrs. Bates used to send them all she could, but it wasn't much. It's hard lines on the little one too; she can't have any education, or anything she ought to have. I know it worries her mother a good deal, but there's no help for it.

There's one good thing, though; the little thing's health is first-rate now, and she's pretty as a picture. I saw her last month when I went up to try to get Jere to go second mate with us to China, and let us keep Bows on third.

“Jere's fitter for master than he is for second mate, and I should have felt queer to be giving him orders, but I should have been glad to have had him along all the same. Bows didn't care to go second anyway. It's all the same to him in the end whether he goes second or third, and he knows it. It looks a little as if the old man might make something out of Bows this time, though. He got him out of New York sober, and out of Bermuda sober, and I don't think the like has happened to him before for many a year. I thought if I could get Jere to sea once more, he'd pick up again, but he'd lost all his courage and wouldn't go. Jere and I saw some lively times together in the war. Both of

us were pretty young then, and in those days Jere wasn't afraid of anything. I suspect he don't care to leave his wife nowadays, and I don't know that I blame him much. A right good helpmate she is to Jere, and no mistake. Handsome woman, too."

"How old is Mrs. Bates's little girl now?" asked Jerves.

"Let me see. She must be about six now, I should say."

"How came her mother ever to marry that worthless fellow?"

But just then the lookout called, "Light on the lee bow, sir!" and Jerves's question was not answered. It was only a steamer, and she was soon out of sight, but the mate's watch was over, and he went below.

Jerves walked the deck a good while, thinking things over, and then went to his cabin and wrote two letters. One was to his bankers, directing them to deposit

certain securities with a Trust Company. The other was to his lawyer, directing how the income of the securities was to be disposed of. He even made a draft of the letter that should be sent by the Trust Company to the person whose name he gave. It ran something like this :—

“SIR : Some person unknown to us has deposited in this Company funds, from which we are directed to pay to you the sum of fifty dollars per month, from the first of November last, for the support, use, and education of Helen, daughter of Charles and Helen M. Bates, so long as she shall remain under your care. The same to be expended according to your discretion. Herewith please find,” etc.

It was nearly morning before his letter to the lawyer was finished, for there were many contingencies to be provided for. Then he went to bed and entertained himself for a while with the attempt to imagine the feelings of the little girl's guardians on receipt of the news of her good

fortune, and what her mother would say when she came to know of it. He thought he had managed so that the donor could not be known or the gift refused. The amount was nothing to him. It would make no difference whatever in his personal expenses, and would make several persons happy. Thinking it all over, he fell asleep, and breakfast was over long before he awoke. He was severely chaffed by the captain for having slept over breakfast time and lost his douche. Mr. Bows, the captain said, was for giving him his douche in bed through the window, for, he said, "Mr. Jerves wouldn't like to miss a rinse."

Jerves bore all their chaff with even more than his usual equanimity, and rather chuckled to himself, as he thought what Mrs. Bates would say if she knew how it happened. He was now impatient to get his letters off, and his anxiety to meet some homeward-bound vessel attracted at-

tention. With good luck the news might reach Mrs. Bates at Honolulu, and he wished he might see her face when she read her letters. He thought he had provided against the possibility of any suspicion falling on himself by making the payments commence from the 1st of November, which was before he had ever seen Mrs. Bates.

Fortune favored him this time, for the next day but one they spoke the Bark *Galatea*, from Rio for New York, and his letters, with many others, were sent on board her.

The time passed smoothly. The ship was now sailing on summer seas, with steady, fair winds. Each day was like yesterday, but to the passengers there was no monotony. All had enough to do, though there was no hurry about doing it. To Jerves it was almost an ideal life, —perfect ease and comfort, no cares, good living, pleasant company, and not too much

of it. Mr. Rollins had plenty of leisure to work out with him problems at chess or mathematics when they felt disposed. The captain busied himself with a wonderful piece of wood-carving, for which Mrs. Bates had copied him an elaborate arabesque design out of some book.

Mrs. Bates had discovered that the mate knew her friend Jere Haskins, and had seen her little girl. That was enough starting ground for many a long talk, walking the deck with him in the brilliant moonlight, or watching the phosphorescent wake of the ship. She made him repeat, over and over again, his stories of how she looked, and what she said and did. He did not tell her how very poor her friend Jere was — she knew he was poor, but not how poor — but he found out that, before starting, she had sent him for the child the last five-dollar bill she had. Had she been taken back to New York in the tug that

brought her to the ship, she would have been left there absolutely penniless. She did not know that Joel Watterson was waiting on the dock for news of her.

The story of Rollins's and Jerves's life on the bark was more than once repeated. She asked a great many questions about it, especially about the sick captain and his wife, and how they tended him. She accused the mate of not being an impartial narrator, when he gave all the credit to Jerves, and once she nearly got those two at loggerheads, by comparing in their presence their different stories. Jerves accused the mate of telling tales out of school, and the mate declared he would have the truth told if he started the bowsprit, and said Jerves would make it out that it was he who broke that pirate's jaw-bone, if he was not on the spot to contradict him. Mrs. Bates knew the truth of the story, having visited the German

woman in the hospital at Bermuda, but she made Rollins tell it all over. She wondered whether the three men had been tried yet, and of course that brought out again the account of the fight on the bark's deck. It was very easy to excite Rollins's enthusiasm on that subject, and perhaps it was because he enjoyed telling the story so much, that she invited him to rehearse it so often.

Now the weather grew very hot. They crossed the equator in longitude 30° , and some of the sailors were put through the old-fashioned and almost disused ceremony of a visit from Father Neptune, to the great amusement of all, especially the children, who begged and were finally allowed to take a share in the jollification. That day was made a general holiday, and Mr. Bows, having asked, and been given, the special charge of the boys, gave them plenty of fun, and looked after them with a jealous

care that diverted the ladies exceedingly — who, as may be supposed, kept an anxious eye on him. But there was no occasion for anxiety, for if they had been two kittens, instead of rollicking boys, Bows could scarcely have been more tender of them. The effort of “the old man” to make something of Bows, got a good lift that day.

The terrible heat lasted two or three weeks, with calms, and light airs from every direction. Little was attempted but to protect themselves from the sun, and make themselves as comfortable as they could. They swung their hammocks under double awnings, and slept in them as much as possible. In the cabins the heat was almost insufferable, and nobody stayed in them but the African steward and stewardess. Meals were served on deck, and those three weeks were a protracted picnic. The fruits brought in liberal supply from Bermuda, and Jerves’s canned delicacies, were in great demand.

After that they had fair and steady winds again, and sailed rapidly to the south, the nights growing cooler and the days more comfortable as they went. The daily occupations of reading, writing, sketching, and working, and the usual amusements of music, card-playing, shuffle-board, and quoits, went on south of the equator as they had on the north of it. Some three weeks of this brought them to a region of storms again, and occasional gales met them; but our passengers had now learned not to fear them, and even to take interest in them.

CHAPTER IX.

JACK.

THEN came the first seriously unpleasant experience of the voyage. One Sunday at the usual service, Mrs. Bates missed the brown and wrinkled face of the old sailor who had asked for another song on their first Sunday out, and learned that the poor old man was seriously ill in the forecastle. Now she remembered that she had seen Jerves and the first mate making frequent visits to the forward part of the ship, and that they always returned with sober faces. She had quite liked the quiet, gentle ways of the old man, and had often exchanged a few pleasant words with him. There are not many left now of his kind, merely a few relics of a past generation. The rest of the *Ajax's* crew was only about

the average sailor of to-day, though Captain Bluson had done what he could in the way of selecting his men so as to have a peaceable ship when his wife was on board. He had some good men who had sailed with him before, and who knew that, though he would have discipline, he was not a brute, and that if they behaved themselves they could be sure of kind treatment. A few trifling skirmishes with Mr. Bows and the third mate in the first week out had taught others the advantages of good conduct, and there was no further trouble on board. Once Mrs. Bates had had quite a long talk with the old man while he sat on a hatch-house making a canvas bucket. He was born on the sea, always lived on it, and was never content off of it. He had been married, and his only daughter was the wife of the mate of a whaler. And he brought and showed Mrs. Bates the trifles he had picked up on his last three voyages for his little granddaughter. She

told him about her own little daughter who also had sunny eyes and golden hair, like his little Susie. He said he liked to hear her sing, and she sang softly to him when there was no one by. He gave her a wonderful bit of coral from Madagascar, and a shell, curiously carved, from Borneo.

She asked permission to visit him, which was granted, the sailors ranging themselves aside and taking off their hats as she passed. Jerves went with her. They found the old man lying in his bunk, evidently very feeble. His shipmates had done the best they could for him, but it is hard to make a sick man comfortable in a ship's fore-castle. He tried to rise and salute her, but was too weak. She smoothed his pillows, and gave him such medicines as were provided, and talked cheerfully with him. His thoughts ran on little Susie and the things he was taking to her, and he spoke of Mrs. Bates's little Helen, who he imagined resembled Susie. He talked to Jerves

in a manner that showed Jerves to have been a frequent visitor to him, and she found that Jerves and Rollins had been watching and caring for him several days without letting her or the captain's wife know of it. They would not disturb the sunshine in the cabin by mention of the shadow in the forecastle. Now, however, she understood those mysterious conferences of the captain with Jerves and Rollins. She would gladly have stayed and nursed the poor man, but in the forecastle such a thing was impossible. She asked the captain for leave to give up her own room to him, but he refused, saying, as she thought, rather harshly, that he had made other arrangements. In the afternoon, however, these arrangements appeared. The room adjoining her own was cleared of the extra small stores that had been stowed away in it, and made suitable for the sick man's occupancy. Then the carpenter came and unscrewed the parti-

tion between the two rooms, and made a door of it. She could now visit and nurse the old man as she pleased, while her own room was undisturbed. The way in which it was done told her that it had all been carefully planned beforehand, and she recognized how care for her comfort had been made to accord with what it was thought would be her wishes. She knew who it was had done it, for she recollected having seen Jerves and the carpenter in earnest consultation the day before. She saw that it had been intended that whenever she should know of the old man's sickness, or when her care would be of use to him, she should be given the opportunity to attend him if she wished, as she undoubtedly would. The thoughtfulness and regard for her feelings implied in this touched her deeply—even more than it surprised her that her wishes had been so correctly judged.

When everything had been prepared

under the captain's supervision — Jerves not being visible — careful hands brought the sick man to the room and laid him in the berth. “Now, Helen, I leave the old man in your hands,” said the captain. “My wife will help you, and Jerves will be vexed if you don't call on him when you need anything. Don't spare him. Take good care of the old fellow; he has been with me ever since I have been a master. He hasn't been able to work much of late years, but he wanted to come with me this voyage, and I hadn't the heart to leave him behind. I think he has only one more voyage to make, and it isn't far off either. I'll come in and see him once in a while.”

The captain went away, and his wife came and shared Mrs. Bates' room, and they two took care of the sick man by turns. There was really not much that could be done but to give him soothing medicines and make his bed comfortable.

He was very patient, and if Mrs. Bates would sit by him and let her hand lie on his he was satisfied. At the least unusual stir in the room Jerves was always at the door to see what was wanted, and the ladies wondered when and how he slept. The captain kept the boys mostly with him, and they were very quiet.

Next to Mrs. Bates, the sick man liked to have Jerves with him. They seemed to have something in common, and it appeared afterwards that he had charged Jerves with messages to his daughter and little Susie, and directed what should be done with the little things he had been keeping for them.

The watching did not last very long. On the morning of the fourth day the old man awoke, after quite a long sleep, and asked Mrs. Bates if he could see Mr. Jerves. Jerves was at hand in an instant, and the sick man repeated some of the directions he had already given.

“You’ve been very good to old Jack, and he’s much obliged to ye. He’s going up aloft pretty soon, and maybe he’ll think of ye when he gets there. Thank ye, ma’am, for all your kindness. And you too, sir, and please don’t forget the things for Susie. God bless you both” —and he added in the same tone in which he made the responses in the service, “Amen.”

Soon after, he asked to see the captain, who was quickly summoned,—and he motioned the others away. After thanking him for his kindness during the many years they had sailed together, he confided to him that if it could be arranged without hurting the feelings of his kind friends, he would rather go to the fore-castle to die. The cabin was no place for such as him. He had always lived in the fore-castle, and in the fore-castle he would like to die. Maybe they wouldn’t know him up there if he came from the cabin, but if he came from the fore-castle he would meet many an old

shipmate who would have a good word to say for him.

The captain promised to have his wishes complied with, and in a short time he was removed on the bed on which he lay, and placed in his own bunk. A light smile passed over his features as he recognized the familiar surroundings. The men gathered about, and he called them all up to shake hands with him. "Old Jack's going, mates, good-bye to ye all," he said.

The captain set two of his best men to watch with him, with orders to report when they should see any signs of change. Jerves hovered about ready to receive their message. It came very soon. Jerves beckoned to Mrs. Bates and looked at the captain, and all three entered the forecastle together. The sick man smiled faintly again as he recognized them, feebly extended his hand to Mrs. Bates, and all waited for the end. The breath grew fainter, and just as eight bells struck he breathed his last.

CHAPTER X.

ROUND CAPE HORN.

AFTER this they had a series of gales — “strong breezes,” the captain called them, but our passengers thought them rather heavy gales — till they reached the latitude of Cape Horn. There they were knocked about for two whole weeks. Three times the *Ajax* tried to get round the Cape, and was driven back. The fourth time, a slant of wind gave her a bit of a chance, and in a few hours she was clear of that ugly point. Thence they sailed away to the west, and then turning the ship’s head to the north, found smoother seas and milder weather. They met no more wrecks, no disabled steamers, but kept on their desired course without any unusual events. There was

plenty to be seen and noted. All the glories of the southern heavens, and all the wonders of the seas on the west of the continent, were over and around them as they had been on the east. Catching a shark once or twice interested them, but otherwise there were few incidents. It would seem that such a voyage must be weary and monotonous, but in truth our passengers found it far otherwise, and the days were too short for their multifarious occupations and amusements. The captain's wife was of course always busy. Two lively boys, brimful of health and spirits, are not likely to leave their careful mother much time for folded hands. Mrs. Bates had plenty of occupation. The boys' lessons took up some time, and the trunk full of materials provided by her friend Mrs. Watterson gave her abundant sewing. Her heart was very full, whenever she read the kind note she found in the top of the

trunk. She pasted it inside the lid, and never opened the trunk without an impulse to fall on her knees. "And you need not worry a bit about little Helen; we will look after her," were among the last words it said. And then there was Jerves's journal, in which she was greatly interested, and which was now nearly as much hers as his. It was always open to both. In fact it was almost public property, for the captain had written a story of college life for it, and his wife a simple and charming little episode of her girlhood. Mr. Rollins gave an account of the capture of a slaver, and Mr. Bows told of the wreck of the *Juniata*, in a manner that was second mate all over. Jerves, in his frequent excursions to the forward part of the ship, picked up among the men many an anecdote and incident, and many a song, and all went into the journal.

Then they had what they called balls

and operas and concerts and garden-parties and charades, that people on land incline to think exclusively their own. It was a "garden-party" whenever they played ring quoits and shuffle-board, and there were "charades" whenever the boys were unusually quiet for an hour or so, and then appeared rigged out in costumes of anything inappropriate for boys' wear, and pretended to represent some impossible word. Mrs. Bates had had set a ball rolling that was not easily stopped, when she dressed up those boys to enact "cat's-paw" on the birthday festival. Their mother sighed whenever she saw them appear, and it took her an hour to put in order what they deranged in ten minutes. They had concerts, in which all took part, especially Mr. Bows, who was rather proud of his singing, and gave "In the Bay of Biscay O," with a power of lungs that the captain said threatened to "take the mizzen topsail aback."

One glorious evening, when the moon was at its full, the men were dancing to the music of the steward's violin. By some chance he struck a very passable waltz. The captain said to his wife, "Carrie, I wonder if we have forgotten how to waltz?" It appeared they had not, and Jerves and Mrs. Bates applauded them. His wife getting out of breath, the untiring captain came up to Mrs. Bates with: "Now, Helen, it's your turn"—and Mrs. Bates waltzed with him with an ease that surprised even herself. She had not realized before how completely her health and strength were restored. Jerves wondered whether she would waltz with him, and, with his usual sagacity, deciding that the only way to know was to ask her, did so, and she consented, but after dancing a few minutes she suddenly stopped and sat down, trembling a little, and looking pale. Jerves thought she was ill, but she said she was not at all. The feeling had all at once come

over her that dancing with Jerves was too pleasant, that there was some strange attraction about it that she must resist. The sensation was very vague, but, whatever it was, it had controlled her for an instant. She recovered herself quickly, but was almost frightened, and would not dance any more. She was glad when the music ceased, and she went to bed with an unaccountable disquiet. She wished she could accuse Jerves of something, but no — he had been as respectful, and even as formal, as any casual partner at an evening party. It did seem as if there was something more than usual in the steadiness of his right arm about her, and the tenderness with which he held her hand. He had never taken her hand before, she remembered, except the day when he came from the bark, and that had been at a time of excited congratulations, and he had shaken it warmly. Then she felt ashamed that she should be thinking so much about him,

and so, with an effort, she turned her thoughts to the German captain, and wondered whether he had entirely recovered from the fever, and whether Jerves's treatment of him had been quite correct.

Sleep came at last. Next morning she was quiet, and almost dull, until Jerves handed her the journal, in which to write an account of the dance, which after a while she did, with uncommon spirit and humor—perhaps more than were quite natural. Jerves was not altogether satisfied. She had a good deal to say about the moonlight, and about the dancing of the sailors, and of the captain and his wife, but not a word of herself, scarcely a word of him. After the dance Jerves had not cared for a pipe, but brought one of his choicest cigars and a bottle of claret, and sat until every one but the watch on deck was fast asleep. He thought of Mrs. Bates's dancing, and wondered if her friend Jere had received the letter from the Trust Com-

pany yet, and whether it was likely she would hear about it when they reached Honolulu. He thought he might have given more—though perhaps it was better as it was. The obligation to the unknown benefactor might oppress her. He considered whether there was any other way in which he could do something for her advantage. He had a good deal of money, more than he knew what to do with. Without almost purposely wasting it, he could not spend his income. Perhaps she could advise him what to do with it. He was tempted to consult her. But this might seem to be making parade of his wealth, and the contrast with her poverty might afflict her. He did not think it would; she was superior to any feeling of envy. Still, it might give her a momentary pang. And if he consulted with her, it would effectually prevent him from using any of his money for her benefit if he should hereafter see any opportunity to do it. He

compared her with the girl he had first been engaged to, and she seemed to belong to an entirely different species. If he had met with a woman like this in his youth, he would—well, he would have had an entirely different opinion of the sex. He wondered again what sort of a brute her husband had been, for surely he could be only a thorough brute who would treat such a woman with anything but care and tenderness. He was not a marrying man himself; he had long ago resolved never to marry and had not the slightest intention of changing his mind, but there were lots of men for whom she would make a splendid wife. She was young yet—only twenty-eight—such a woman ought not to remain unmarried. There was Rollins, the mate—he would be master next voyage; as fine a fellow as ever shipped. Well, he was not exactly the right one, though she might do worse. He thought over his club acquaintance, but failed to recall one that

he thought exactly suitable, and, his cigar being out, he went to bed.

In the afternoon of the next day, after the journal had been written out, he took the steward forward, and by dint of much humming and whistling he taught that unlearned musician a new waltz. Jerves wanted another dance, and they had one that same night. Mrs. Bates was for a moment disposed to refuse, but thought she would not be so foolish, and she danced all the evening.

And so the good ship kept on northward towards the equator, and all went well. There were no quarrels among the little group of passengers, though many lively discussions on many subjects. There was not likely to be stagnation of the intellect where the captain and Mrs. Bates were. Jerves had also his opinions, and, except on the question of matrimony, they generally were founded on reason and good sense. On that subject there had lately been a

truce, though the captain's charming wife was little inclined to regard it, and it was impossible entirely to suppress the captain's chaff. His wife had an idea that here were two capital subjects for matrimony right at hand, and she poured out her views freely to her husband.

"Now those two ought to be married," she said. "I don't see why they are not exactly suited to each other."

"Perhaps you don't, my dear; but if they don't happen to think so, I don't exactly see how you are to make them."

"But they ought to think so without any making. Jerves is a very good fellow, and I am sure Helen is just as lovely as she can be."

"Granted. But suppose Jerves doesn't want a wife, and Helen doesn't want a husband?"

"Now you know Jerves *ought* to have a wife. Do you think a man of his age ought to be rambling round the world in

this way without a woman to look after him?"

"That's just it. He wants to ramble where he likes, without any woman interfering with him."

"I am sure Helen wouldn't interfere any more than was good for him. He ought to be interfered with. He would be all the better for it."

"I don't know that Helen would like interference any better than he."

"I am afraid myself she would be rather loth to give up her independence again."

"Then, besides, don't you see, he is so rich, and she is so poor, she would always be feeling uncomfortable about it."

"He should make her a wedding present large enough to give her a handsome income for her own use."

"That would be nice. And then when she didn't want to live with him, she could go and live somewhere else."

"She always would want to live with

him. I am sure he would be very good to her. And Helen would never quarrel with any one who was reasonable."

"I don't think myself she would pull his hair, or scratch his face, or anything of that kind."

"Now you know she would never give him an unkind word."

"You can't say. Even the gentle Helen might be made angry. I knew one of the sweetest-tempered little women in the world to get awfully vexed — once."

"And awfully sorry she was, too, afterwards, I remember."

"So sorry she forgave the offender."

"I think it was he who forgave. But never mind that any more, dear. I think we ought to manage to bring those two together."

"They seem to be fairly together now, as nearly as I can see. They are playing cribbage together, and very peaceably."

"How stupid you can be when you try! I am quite proud of you."

"Thank you, my dear. Anyway, I doubt if I am brilliant enough to 'bring together,' as you call it, two people who don't want to marry at all."

"How do you know they don't want to marry?"

"I haven't noticed any signs that they did."

"I don't suppose they have made any signals to you, but I think they would make an awfully nice couple."

"So perhaps would a good many others who don't want to marry each other any more than these two. I think I could draw up a marriage contract that would about meet this case, if you must have them married, whether or no."

"I wish you would. I should like to see it."

So the captain hunted up pencil and paper, and "retired into himself," and presently produced what he called a contract.

“There,” said he, “I haven’t taken time to put it into complete legal form, but I think that would about satisfy both these parties.”

This is a copy of it : —

This contract of marriage between HE of the first part, and SHE of the second part, witnesseth : —

1. Neither party is to interfere with the other in any manner whatsoever.

2. Both parties are at full liberty to do whatever they please, without being responsible to the other.

3. Neither party shall pay any of the debts of the other, or contribute in any way to the support of the other.

4. Both parties may live where they choose on condition of paying their own expenses.

5. Neither party shall visit the other unless specially invited.

6. Endearing epithets, such as “Delight of my existence,” “Joy of my soul,” and the like, are strictly prohibited.

7. Certain expressions indicative of intense affection (which are hereafter to be agreed on), such as “How do you do this morning?” and “Good-night,” may be used by each once daily.

8. The party of the second part shall not enforce her views by the throwing of dishes or in any similar manner.

9. The party of the first part shall not box the ears of the party of the second part without giving three days previous notice in writing.

10. Any breach of the conditions of this contract shall be sufficient cause for instantaneous divorce.

“Well, how do you like it?” said the captain. “Do you think it will answer?”

“It’s no more absurd than you are.”

“You couldn’t expect it. When they ask me to make a contract for them, I’ll make a jolly good one, but meanwhile I think this will suit them very well.”

So the captain’s wife found she could get no help from her husband, and went away, racking her bright little brain as to how she should bring about what she had determined was one of the most desirable things in the world.

But the party of the first part and the party of the second part both went on in

their usual way, excellent friends, and perhaps each gaining in the esteem and regard of the other, but without any apparent inclination towards a closer relation. If they thought of any other relation, it was rather as something that might have been than as anything possible yet to be. If her husband had been more like Jerves, she may have thought, she would have been spared much sorrow. If I had met such a woman as this in my youth, Jerves may have said to himself, I should have been a happier man. It was too late now; he was too old. Perhaps, without their being conscious of it, these very feelings made them more gentle and friendly than they would otherwise have been. One evening, when all were sitting, chatting and telling stories together, the captain spoke among other things of a man he knew who fancied himself very much in love with a certain lady. He was very attentive to her, and made her presents,

and asked her to marry him so many times that she, having no other particular engagement on hand at the time, finally consented, though not caring for him in the least, as she freely avowed. She said she had a sister, a widow, who was much better suited for him than she was, and she wished he would go West and see her. She was sure he would be much more in love with her sister than he was with her. But the man declined to go West and insisted on marrying the young lady; and he bought a fine house and furnished it, and the wedding day was fixed, the wedding journey arranged, and all their plans duly made. Three or four days before the one fixed for the wedding, the widowed sister arrived from the West, according to agreement. She was to get the house into running order during the absence of the new couple, and have it in readiness for them on their return.

She came, and she also saw and con-

quered, for, when the wedding-day arrived, it was she who went to the altar, and not the other; and the other stayed at home and lighted the fires and set in motion the nuptial festivities. The arrangement seemed to be satisfactory to all parties.

Now if No. 1 had withdrawn without finding another wife for the man, she would have been thought a heartless coquette, and the man would perhaps have thought he could never be consoled. And here within four days he drops No. 1 and takes up No. 2, and there are no hearts broken at all. And if he had married No. 1 it is also quite possible she would have made him a good wife, and he would have been just as happy with her as he was with No. 2.

“All which proves what?” asked Jerves.

“I have forgotten just what it does prove,” answered the captain.

“What did you intend to prove, captain?” inquired Mrs. Bates.

“I believe I have forgotten that, too — but it ought to fit into some of your arguments. If it suits any of you, you are welcome to it.”

“It would suit my old acquaintance who thought some one else could select a wife for a man as well as he could himself,” said Jerves.

“It only proves that half the men in the world don’t know their own minds, and everybody is aware of that already,” put in the captain’s wife.

“It proves that women may sometimes marry men whom they do not love,” said Mrs. Bates.

“Then the story suits you all, and that is a good deal more than I expected,” claimed the captain.

“Don’t those women make just as good wives as if they were in love before they were married?” inquired Jerves.

“Of course not,” was the prompt reply of the captain’s wife.

"Some may, but I think not many. I should be afraid," added Mrs. Bates.

"I shouldn't wonder if there were a good many," said the captain. "I have heard it said a woman will love any man who is kind to her."

"And some say one man is just as good as another," added Jerves, and was immediately sorry he had said it, remembering Mrs. Bates's husband.

The captain went on. "And I have known good, middle aged and elderly women to encourage girls to marry men for whom they knew the girls did not care a bit."

"Yes, and I once knew such a woman to urge a girl to marry a man whom she not only did not like, but who was absolutely repulsive to her. She could scarcely think of his touching her without a shudder. 'Oh, you'll get over that after a while,' she would say. 'He is rich, and can give you a good home, and I think he'll be

kind to you. I know he is stupid and coarse, but you'll get accustomed to him. A great many girls lose good chances by being too particular. It won't do to be fussy about such little things as those. After you have lived with a man a few years, you won't mind his ways much.' Now what do you think of that woman's advice, Mrs. Bates?"

"I think, Mr. Jerves, it was wrong and sinful. The girl would be an unhappy and wicked wife. I don't know which should be pitied most, the wife or the husband."

"And yet the woman considered herself an unusually good and pious person."

"I think she was mistaken in her advice."

The captain's wife did not see that this kind of conversation tended at all to "bring those two together," as she had phrased it, and decided it was bedtime.

CHAPTER XI.

HELPLESS.

BUT the evenings for conversation on this or other subjects were coming to an end. They were nearing the equator again, with the usual light, baffling winds, terrible heat and occasional storms of thunder and lightning and rain. Jerves had long proposed to himself to see if he could photograph the ship and sea by a flash of lightning. The lightning during these storms was too continuous to make this easy, but he contrived a plan that he thought would work. He set the instrument under the projecting roof of the saloon, in what he thought would be a good position, and covered it with a heavy tarpaulin. The portion that covered the lens he would raise by means of cords, at the

same time that he removed the cap from the lens.

At what he thought a suitable moment he would remove and replace the cap and lower the tarpaulin over the whole. Between the flashes the darkness was intense, and he hoped he could, by acting very quickly, take and preserve a negative that he could develop at leisure. He waited almost impatiently for a thunder-storm, and one evening it came. His success was complete so far, but just as he had got the cap replaced, an extraordinary flash came and every person on deck was stricken down. The man at the wheel was thrown violently against the rail, the mate fell heavily to the deck, and the mizzen top-gallant mast was shivered to splinters. The captain and his wife and Mrs. Bates, who were watching Jerves from the saloon, were blinded and partially stunned. Jerves fell beside his camera, dragging it with him in his fall.

The captain was the first to recover from the shock, and he carried the two ladies to their rooms, where they shortly came to their senses, and in a few minutes the mate and the man at the wheel were able to return to their duties. Jerves was not to be seen, but, on search being made, he was found quite unconscious under the tarpaulin, which had fallen over him. He had been standing near the foot of the mast that had been struck, and had received more of the shock than the others. They removed him to bed, but it was long before he recovered consciousness, and when he did he found that the slightest light gave him exquisite pain. They bandaged, and did all that their knowledge of such things prompted, but no one slept much that night. It was a sad time. Perhaps Jerves himself felt less than the others, for all his senses seemed benumbed. The morning brought some alleviation, for all but Jerves were able to be about.

They brought him out of the stifling heat of the cabin and made him a bed on the deck under thick awnings. Except from the soreness in his eyes, he suffered little pain, but could bear no light.

Was he to be always so? His thoughts were very busy, and, though he spoke cheerfully and talked of his blindness as a mere passing incident that would be over in a day or two, he felt a good deal of doubt about it, and the thought that he might remain in this useless, helpless, dependent condition for the rest of his life at times almost drove him frantic.

A week ago he had felt that he was almost an old man. In five years more he would be forty, and he remembered how in his youth he had thought that a man of forty could have little but old age to look forward to. At thirty-five, forty did not look so much like old age, but forty-five¹ would soon come, and there could not be much worth living for after that.

Now, he thought, he was only thirty-five, and there might be twenty, thirty, even thirty-five more years of life before him. Thirty-five years of helplessness, of dependence on others, of deprivation of all the pleasures the world had in store! Was life worth having on such terms?

If he had been born blind, he might have trained other senses to supply in part that of sight; but now it was too late. There could be no joys to come, he could do nothing but remember those that were past. He tried to recall things he had seen, to fix them afresh in his memory, so that he might have them to think of hereafter. Lying there on his mattress, he thought of many things, while the others spoke quietly, not knowing whether he was asleep or awake. It was a weary day to all. The next day he had even less pain, but the light was equally painful. He could sit up and could talk, and,

though all had doubts about his ever recovering his sight, they took their tone from him, and spoke as if they thought it certain. He asked Mrs. Bates to write up the journal and read it to him, which she did. What she wrote about his blindness was, "Mr. Jerves has not even yet recovered the use of his eyes." Her own diary read very differently from that. She still had some hope, but it was slight. To employ him, she asked him to hold some skeins of yarn for her to wind, and made him cut the leaves of a book she did not want to read. She induced him to dictate something for the journal, and kept him about it as long as she could. The captain came and talked a little, but enforced cheerfulness was more than he could stand, and he went away again. His wife spoke more naturally than the rest, and the boys played about a good deal as usual. The general atmosphere was more cheerful, and after a while Jerves himself felt as if his

blindness might be only temporary, and so his despondency passed away somewhat. Still, he could not move without guidance ; could not cut his own food ; could not find the paper-cutter that he had dropped. He was almost helpless. There were plenty of hands at his service, but he found that the hands of Mrs. Bates were the readiest, and it was she who was quickest to divine his wishes, and she who led him most carefully. She gave him something to do to occupy his mind and divert his thoughts as much as she could. She made him talk of things they had spoken of before, and tell of things he had seen in his travels, of Nuremberg and Constantinople, of Egypt and the pyramids. His description of quaint old Nuremberg was so graphic and interesting she made him repeat it all, so that she might write it down. His memory was good, and, besides that, his descriptions were the more vivid from his loss of sight. It is probable that he chose

his words and made them more clear, purely as an intellectual exercise. He was full of anecdotes, and told many stories, though somehow they seemed to be mostly of scenes of sorrow and suffering, as if those came unconsciously to his mind. The story of a friend of his family, a young girl, dying alone and unloved, in Paris, he told with a pathos that made all their hearts ache.

He insisted on having another concert such as they had before, and to please him they carried out the project, and Mr. Bows sang some of his loudest and some of his most comical songs; but when Jerves stood up to sing, with the black bandage over his eyes, the captain choked, his wife burst into tears, and Mrs. Bates's accompaniment broke down.

Another day he wanted a quotation, and Mrs. Bates found it for him, and afterwards read the whole poem to him, to his great enjoyment. After that, reading became a

frequent occupation for her. She was always at hand when wanted, and never in the way.

And so the days ran on.

CHAPTER XII.

HONOLULU.

ONE morning a very early riser would have found the captain quietly walking the deck long before daylight. Rollins and Bows were also both at hand, and two extra men on the lookout in the tops. There was an air of expectancy over the ship, until suddenly, "Land ho!" was heard from the maintop, and Rollins was quickly in the rigging with his binocular. The captain stopped a minute, and then continued his walk. The word had come half an hour sooner than he expected, that was all, and it did not excite him in the least.

Soon the day broke, and before long something like a great white cloud resting on a dark base was visible from the deck.

A long look at it through the glass, and the captain called down the companionway, "Carrie! Boys! Tumble up here, land is in sight!" — and "Land, land, land!" rang through the cabins and saloon.

"Tumble up" the boys did, regardless of costume, and the ladies and Jerves were not long after them.

"Where is the land? I don't see any land," cried they all, after straining their eyes in the direction in which every one was looking.

"Do you see that great white cloud yonder?"

"Yes."

"That is the snow-covered top of Mauna Kea, and near Mauna Kea is Mauna Loa, and on the side of Mauna Loa is one of the greatest volcanoes in the world, and under it is Hawaii, one of the Sandwich Islands, that we started more than three months ago to find."

And so they drew towards the land, the

cloud growing larger and its base darker as they went on. Then the shores were plainly to be seen and, they passed the day in watching them and describing the changing views to each other and to Jerves.

Night came on again, and the fires of Kilauea took the places of the cloud and the mountain. Daylight showed them the high peaks of Oahu right ahead, and they passed rapidly by lovely Waikiki and Leahi, and before noon were safely at anchor in the outer harbor of Honolulu, and soon after all had exchanged the cosy and pleasant saloons and cabins of the *Ajax* for larger but scarcely more pleasant rooms at the Hawaiian Hotel.

At Honolulu, Jerves consulted all the physicians he came across, local and passing, surgeons of men-of-war and of passenger steamers, but without satisfaction.

The only real encouragement he got was from the surgeon of an English steamer,

one of those ignorant young fellows sometimes carried on those ships,—men whose principal medical qualifications consist in a capacity for singing jolly songs and telling an infinite number of stories in the smoking-rooms. This one told him he thought his sight would come back as suddenly as it had been lost.

It is needless to say Jerves did not value this opinion highly, and thought the sovereign he paid for it rather poorly invested. The M. D. promptly handed the coin over to the steward of his ship on account, but the subsequent proceedings hardly tended to lighten his indebtedness to that functionary. Total abstinence when on duty was a rule of the ship, but in port the regulation could hardly be expected to be observed.

Jerves met in Honolulu of course the usual number of “globe trotters,” and among them two or three that he had met before.

One of them was a former acquaintance in Colorado. When Jerves knew him there he was fresh from New England, and had all the usual New England habits of speech ; but later he had taken a pride in casting them all off and in taking on Western directness and force, with the idea that bluntness indicated honesty, and that impertinence was only plain speaking. This man, whose name was Dulcifer, but who came to be known and spoken of and even sometimes addressed as "Mr. Colorado," — a name which did not displease him, — attached himself to our party as much as he could, and went everywhere with it when not prevented. Jerves was mostly confined to a dark room, with a bandage over his eyes, but he insisted on being left alone rather than deprive the others of the pleasure of viewing the interesting and varied attractions of the Islands. Their numerous rides and drives, which they enjoyed extremely, were there-

fore mostly taken without him. For Mrs. Bates, to be on horseback was a delight she had not experienced for many years, and little Harry was the most attached of squires. They all gratified Jerves by going on excursions, and gratified themselves by returning as quickly as possible. The amount of talk they all made out of a trip, that ought to have taken a day but was run over in a few hours, surprised the Colorado man, who would have told all about it and dismissed the subject in five minutes. He could not see that the quick return and long talks were for the purpose of relieving Jerves in the tedium of his confinement. Once they induced Jerves to join them in an excursion by water to Waikiki. He was sensitive about appearing in public on shore, but alone with his friends he scarcely thought of his bandages. This time the captain thought he had got away without "Colorado," whose presence always annoyed

him. He could scarcely compel himself to treat him with reasonable courtesy, and often wished he could have him at sea for a while, where he would give him ample opportunity to keep a lookout from the foretop. His wife was, perhaps, even less inclined to be courteous than himself. That sweet-tempered lady, ordinarily one of the most amiable of her sex, became especially angry when she once discovered that Mr. Colorado was paying more than really necessary attention to her friend Helen. She watched him sharply, and made such remarks to him that if gentle sarcasm could have destroyed a pachyderm, Mr. Colorado would have been obliterated. But that gentleman's thick skin was also too well overlaid with good opinion of himself and all that belonged to him to allow her shafts to penetrate it, and he took it all very smilingly, considering that it was only her natural manner, and receiving it in the same spirit in which the

Yorkshireman received his wife's beatings. "It bleezes she, an' don't urt I." Even all the small coin he expended in inducing the youthful islanders to swim and dive for the amusement of her boys failed to mollify her.

This day the captain thought he had got safely away without him, and almost chuckled over the little ruse by which he had accomplished it; but they had not been long on shore before Colorado arrived in a boat by himself, and began to apologize for being late, and said he was glad they had not felt obliged to wait for him. The captain told him he had not felt at all obliged, and his wife sharply added, "Oh, not in the least. I was not even aware you had been invited."

"There, I suspected you had forgotten me," he said.

"I don't think you were forgotten at all," said Jerves, and the captain was on the point of saying something that could

by no possible means have been construed as complimentary, had not Mrs. Bates stopped him. She would rather endure the man's company than have a quarrel.

Colorado noticed her look to the captain, and ignored Jerves's words, resolved to have his revenge later. He thought the look was a reproof for their rudeness, and an intimation that she wished him to remain. Any way, remain he did, and was as polite as he knew how to be. If he vexed the captain and his wife perpetually by grinding up all sentiments, fancies, and feelings, in his mill of coarse matter-of-fact, there was a certain air of geniality in the manner in which he poured them into the hopper, that made it hard to take offence. He even thought Mrs. Bates enjoyed his society, for though she said but little she smiled occasionally at some quaint westernism of language, which he took for encouragement to go on. So he made himself very much at home, and ex-

erted himself to be agreeable, and carried the burden of the conversation. He was a good deal attracted by Mrs. Bates, and having interviewed Rollins, and treated Bows, and quizzed the captain and his wife with scanty, but as he thought sufficient results, he decided that, with her at the head of the finest house and the broadest table at Denver, there was no position, social or political, to which he might not aspire. He had not been obliged to "take account of stock" for several years, but now he counted up his cattle ranches and silver mines, and calculated how much he could afford to expend per annum in support of his aspirations. The result was satisfactory, and he resolved, as he expressed it to himself, to "go in for her."

But he did not know what might possibly be her relations with Jerves. Their intimacy might be only the result of close association during the long voyage, or it might be something more. Their manner

told nothing, and he had got no information out of the captain or his wife. He determined to ask Jerves about it,—not that the information he might get would make any difference in his resolution to propose to her;—he would cut Jerves out if he could, and if it were necessary, but if he found there was no engagement between them, his business would be the simpler, and perhaps his chances of success better. If there was anything between them, he would use it to worry and annoy Jerves, in revenge for his remark about not being forgotten in the invitations to the excursion. He was quite conscious that he might meet with a refusal, but he would be none the worse off, and could stand even that; and on the whole he would venture to risk his chances against those of a blind man. His wealth was even greater than his rival's, and his possible position might be much higher than that of the unambitious Jerves. He did not know how much

these would count with Mrs. Bates, but he had great confidence in them.

After a time the party scattered about, amusing themselves as they liked. Jerves remained lying on the grass under a tree. Presently Colorado came back and accosted him. "Well, old man, I found they had left you alone, so I came back to keep you company."

"Very kind of you," said Jerves, who had an intuition that this attention had some purpose in it, "but I am not at all lonely, and you need not have troubled yourself."

"I didn't care for the walk anyway. Have a cigar?"

"No, thanks."

"I think I'll light up. When do you sail for Hong Kong?"

"In three days, I believe."

"The surgeon of the —— thinks you ought to go back to the States on account of your eyes."

"That was not his advice to me."

"Likely enough. Those fellows like to order what they think will please the patient." And after a pause, he continued, "That Mrs. Bates is a fine woman."

"She would no doubt be pleased to know your opinion of her."

"Long a widow?"

"Several years."

"Is she well off?"

"I can't tell you. Are you interested in her circumstances?"

"Not specially, but a nice woman like that ought not to have to work."

"Perhaps she prefers to do so."

"I suppose you got pretty well acquainted with her on board ship."

"Tolerably."

"Fairly well educated, isn't she?"

"I should think she was very well educated."

"Have you any notion of marrying her?"

“Have you any notion that it is none of your business whether I have or not?”

“Now don’t get riled at a fair question. You needn’t answer if you don’t like. If you are engaged to her I imagine you wouldn’t be ashamed to say so, but if you’re not, and I take a fancy to her, I suppose the game is open to me as well as anybody else.”

“Then it is only fair to say that Mrs. Bates is not engaged to me. If I decline to say any more it is simply because it is a matter that does not concern you.”

“That’s square. It don’t concern me that you should be after her, if you don’t get her.”

“I did not say I was after her.”

“You didn’t deny it, either, so I thought perhaps you were. But after her or not, if you are not engaged to her, I consider myself at liberty to try my chances if I like. I think she’s a fine woman, and will suit me.”

“Have you any reason to think she favors you?” asked Jerves, in whom a very little anxiety smothered a good deal of indignation.

“I wouldn’t say I have. Shouldn’t say whether I had or not. But I can offer her a tip-top position, with fifty thousand dollars a year, and women rather like that sort of thing. I don’t believe in love and all that stuff, and she ought to have got over believing in it by this time. If she hasn’t, she won’t want me, and I don’t want her either. Fifty thousand dollars a year is worth more to a woman than all the love that ever was made.”

The coarseness of all this annoyed Jerves more than he would have been willing to show, and he only said,

“The lady may not agree with your views.”

“Perhaps not,” replied the other, “but I am going to find out”; and he laughed as he added, “under the circumstances, I

sha'n't expect any very hearty congratulations from you if I succeed; but I shall not ask any sympathy if I don't." He started to where he saw Mrs. Bates sitting under a tree, while the others were buying cocoanut cups and grass cloth from the natives.

If he desired to worry Jerves, he had most certainly succeeded. Jerves had never regretted his blindness more than now, when it made him feel unable to stand up and pick a quarrel with the fellow, and give or get a thrashing. He could not quarrel very much on what had been said. The tone was offensive enough, but there was not much to get up a personal quarrel on. The man had asked impertinent questions, but he had given short or impertinent answers. He had thought to buy Mrs. Bates with his dollars, and Jerves could not say he had no right to try. He had scoffed at woman's love; but so had he done himself. He might have said he had no intention of marrying Mrs.

Bates,—his blindness would effectually prevent his asking her now, if he had ever been inclined to ;—but he wished he had some right to keep such fellows as this away from her. He had no idea she would accept him. Some women, perhaps many women, would, but he thought she would require something more than mines and ranches. But it came over him bitterly that he had been deceived twice already, and it was barely possible he might be again. The idea was rejected indignantly, and he felt ashamed it should ever have occurred to him.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. COLORADO'S VIEWS, AND HOW THEY WERE RECEIVED.

MEANWHILE, Mr. Colorado (or Mr. Dulcifer) was making his way to where Mrs. Bates was sitting. She received him with her usual calm politeness, and asked him to sit down, with a view to keeping him away from the captain and his wife, and having no presentiment of his purpose in coming to her. She commenced and kept up a lively conversation that helped somewhat to put him at his ease, but brought him no nearer to the point he desired to reach. He tried hard to get there, but the way was difficult and led him all round by Bermuda and Cape Horn and Hong Kong, and back *via* San Francisco to New York, before he came anywhere near it. He got West again as far as Colorado, after a

while. From there he could take the lead himself, and he roamed about among his ranches and mines by a variety of roads, that might be indirect, but which, he thought, all tended in the right direction.

It was some time before it occurred to her to suspect what the man was driving at, but it suddenly did come into her head, and, though she was a little startled, with a bit of malice she kept him on.

But the road to his intended proposal was still crooked, and a good deal up hill, and he found he must take a short cut if he expected to reach it that day, and, in spite of all Jerves had said, he thought delays might be dangerous. So he started by expatiating on the delightful climate of Colorado, comparing it favorably even with the delicious air of Oahu; on its wonderful resources, and the hospitality of its people, and its opportunities for social and political distinction.

“With all your silver and cattle, you

must be enormously rich yourself," said Mrs. Bates.

"I count I am fairly well off. There are a few ahead of me, but not many; and I reckon that in a few years if I keep on I can top any of them."

"I wonder you don't go into political life. With all your talent and money and ambition you ought to succeed."

"I don't know that I sh'an't some day. I've got money enough for it, if I take a notion that way."

"I have always understood that the rich men carried the elections in your State."

"So they do generally, especially if they have great houses, and cut a swell, and entertain company, and all that sort of thing, and make themselves popular."

"You might readily do all that."

"I might, only, you see, I haven't any wife."

"If that is all, you could easily get a wife. You should go east and find one."

“It isn’t every one that would suit me. I should want one smart enough, and good-looking enough, and well educated enough, to carry her head a little above the rest of them. I think I see a woman now that could do it. How would you like living in Colorado yourself?”

“I don’t know Colorado, but I suppose if my interests and affections were there, I could endure it.”

She knew well enough now what had brought him to her tree, and, having no consideration for the man, and thinking he had no feelings to be hurt, she was not much more annoyed than she was amused, and she resolved to let him go on. She saw the captain and his wife approaching, and having the most thorough confidence in their discretion, she managed to get a little behind Mr. Colorado, and waved them a signal to keep away. The captain’s wife saw it, and passed it along to her husband, who instantly set the boys to skipping

pebbles, and he upset their basket of shells, and helped them pick them up, and then upset it again. When this was done, he thought the boys must be hungry again, for it was nearly an hour since they had eaten much of anything, and he set some of the natives to procuring cocoanuts. The boys were rather surprised, for their father usually took more pains to persuade them that they were not hungry, than that they were.

Mr. Colorado, having got started, went on. "If you think you could endure it, I would like to have you try it. I want a wife, and I am sure you would make me a good one, and I think I could be a very tolerable husband. I have never seen a woman I cared to ask to be my wife before, and perhaps I may not express myself just right about it, but if you will take me, I am sure I would do handsomely by you."

"You surprise me very much, Mr. Dulcifer. I did not know that you wanted

a wife, much less that you wanted me. I am only a poor widow, and — ”

“ If you marry me, you won't be poor, and you won't be a widow.”

“ I had no idea you cared for me at all.”

“ On the contrary, I think you would suit me perfectly. You are good-looking enough, and accomplished enough, and smart enough, to fill any position, and I could give you a good one.”

“ That ought to be a temptation,”

“ I hope so. And I could settle twenty thousand dollars a year on you.”

“ So much as that ? ”

“ Yes, or even more — and I can give you the finest establishment in Denver, and the best horses and carriages, and the handsomest diamonds, and — and — whatever you like.”

“ Are you sure you mean all that ? The offer almost makes me giddy.”

“ Yes, and more yet. You and I to-

gether could lead the society of the state. In two years I could be governor."

"That would be a high position, Mr. Dulcifer, for a poor widow, to become a governor's wife. I am afraid it would be too much for me. I am not ambitious."

"Not at all. You would become ambitious, with such chances before you. And you would know how to carry yourself. Then in a couple of years more I might get to Washington. I don't imagine there would be many there that could outswim me. I want my wife to be at the top of the best society in the country."

"You wish to have a wife that would do you credit."

"To be sure I do. And I know you could fill the bill. Come, what do you say?"

"Your proposal is so overwhelming, and so surprising, and so strange, I hardly know what I ought to say."

"Then say Yes, and seal the bargain." And he drew nearer to her.

“Not just yet. Suppose you recapitulate your offers.”

“Recapitulate?” To recapitulate in a case of this kind seemed a cold-blooded proceeding, and he had been quite warmed up before. “I can’t recapitulate. There’s a splendid house, and horses, and diamonds, and all that, and twenty thousand a year for yourself, and thirty more for the housekeeping, and balls, and parties, and such things, and the cream of society, and of everything that’s going. We can have a swell place at Newport, if you like, and trips to Europe, and everything you take a fancy to. We can afford it.”

He was so excited and enthusiastic at the last that she almost regretted having allowed him to go so far, and was silent. He continued: “Say Yes, will you? You’ll make me a very happy man.” And he drew nearer again.

“I shall have to say No, Mr. Dulcifer.”

“Oh, you don’t mean that—don’t, don’t.

Say Yes. I'll do my best to make you happy."

"I could not say Yes, Mr. Dulcifer."

"Don't you think you could be happy with me?"

"I don't really think I could."

"Think what I offer you."

"I have thought of it sufficiently."

"And can't you say Yes to me?"

"I cannot."

"Cannot I prevail on you to change your mind?"

"It would be useless to try."

"Is there no hope for me?"

"None whatever."

"Perhaps I haven't spoken just right. I don't know about such things. But I care more than you think about it. Don't answer right away. Think it over. I'll wait for you. You are the only woman I ever wanted to marry. It would be a good thing for both of us."

Again he was so earnest that she really

regretted having let him say so much. But she knew it was only his pride that would be wounded by a refusal, and it was a kind of pride she had no sympathy for. Perhaps a lesson might be good for him, and anyway he deserved one. She would have no mercy on him. The idea that he could buy any woman he chose! It was too insulting. There were probably some he might buy with his houses and diamonds; but he could not buy her. She would punish him relentlessly, so far as she could.

As for him, he was not accustomed to defeat, and having determined to make her his wife if he could, he would not give it up until all chances were exhausted. Indeed, the difficulty, as usual, only stimulated him. He wanted an immediate acceptance if he could get it, but if he could not have that, he would take such chances as he could get. He was still afraid Jerves was in his way, and he was

not inclined to let her sail for Hong Kong until she had given him a different answer, if he could help it; but, if she did, he would follow her there, and try again. His voyage might be useless, but if that was the only chance he could get, that was the one he would take. Anyway, she would not sail for three days, and even in that time something might be done. He would not give her up yet.

But he was doomed to have another blow.

“I do not want any more time,” said Mrs. Bates. “We should not suit each other, and my mind is quite made up already.”

“Then I suppose I must go, if there is no chance of your changing it. I am very sorry. I hope you will allow me to see you again.”

“If you never recur to this subject, I shall not mention your proposition, except to my friends here, and should meet you, if

you came in my way, just as I should any chance acquaintance."

"Good-bye. I wish you well. You have hurt me badly; but I will try not to annoy you."

He went towards the beach, but she was not quite done with him.

"Mr. Dulcifer, before you go, I should like to ask you one question."

"Certainly."

"I should like to know what put it into your head that I was for sale?"

"For sale, Mrs. Bates?"

"Yes, for sale. Did you not just now try to buy me?"

"Buy you? I never thought of such a thing."

"You offered me twenty thousand dollars a year, and a lot of diamonds and other things."

"If you should be my wife, yes, but then it would be your husband that would give them to you."

“Or rather, if I would have you for my husband, those would be the inducements. What would you call that but buying? If I had been a slave you might have traded with my master, but as I belong to myself you offered them to me. You wanted me to help your ambitious projects, and you promised me so much money if I would do it.”

“You forget the husband.”

“No, I don’t forget the husband, though there was very little husband and a good deal of money in your offer. If I wanted a husband at all, I should prefer more husband and less money. I want neither you nor your money.”

It was clear enough now that he had no further chance, and that it would be in vain to follow her to Hong Kong, but he thought he would fire a parting shot.

He was thoroughly angry.

“I offered you what women generally value most. If you don’t want it, then I

have nothing more to say. If you still have foolish notions about love and devotion you'll get over them. I thought you might have got over them already. Perhaps the man you take for a husband will talk more about them than I do, and not give any more of them, either; and perhaps he'll fool you, and you him, more than I should you, or you me. I hope he won't beat you before you have been married a year."

He raised his hat ceremoniously, and departed.

That last shot in fact was an ugly one, and most heartily did she wish she had not recalled him.

CHAPTER XIV.

MRS. BATES TELLS ALL ABOUT IT.

MR. COLORADO had got his information out of Bows, for he had not disdained to take advantage of Bows's weakness. Up to a certain point Bows was loquacious, but beyond that he got ugly, and when he began to suspect that he was being treated in order that he might be pumped, his ugly temper came promptly to the front, and Mr. Colorado heard some extremely unpleasant language, and only narrowly escaped consequences that would have been to him still more unpleasant. The shock to Bows, when he realized the attempt that had been made on him, was so great that he went on board the ship quite early in the evening, and, at least, half sober.

Bows had got his information, which was not much, out of Rollins, who had

known Mrs. Bates's husband quite well, as they had been school-fellows together. He and Bows had been having quite a long confab on deck one afternoon in the dog-watches, and they had spoken of their concerts and of Mrs. Bates's singing, and so they spoke of her and where she came from, and then of her husband.

"Yes, sir," said Rollins, "Charlie Bates was a tip-top fellow till the drink got hold of him, and then he was the devil. One night—I don't think they had been married a year—a lot of blackguards got him drunk, and he went home and smashed things to pieces, and when she tried to get him to bed he slapped her face and then knocked her down. I reckon I remember about that, for I undertook to talk to the leader of the gang the next day, and he didn't take it kindly, so I gave him a jolly good licking, and the judge—he was a great friend of mine, was the judge—he fined

me five dollars at the police court. I went to see him afterwards, and told him if he would agree not to charge me more than ten the next time I'd like to do it again, but the judge wouldn't commute. The boys wanted to pass round the hat so they could all chip in to pay the fine, but I wouldn't let 'em. I told them to save their money for the next time, because if the fellow didn't leave town he'd get another pounding, and the judge would have to put it on to me heavier. The chap cleared out, but she never knew what made him. I always call to see that judge when I am home. He's told me many a time that he cheated the city out of twenty dollars that day, because he ought to have made me pay twenty-five and didn't. We couldn't keep Charlie from going down hill, though. Once he got the drink in him there was no stopping him. I think we were all rather glad for her sake when he died."

“Bad thing that drink. I wish they wouldn’t make any more of it,” said Bows, as he turned away in response to a rather sharp “What’s the matter with that weather fore-sheet, Mr. Bows?” from the captain.

It would, no doubt, have been better for Mr. Bows if no more drink were made, but he would have been very sorry if he had thought his wish was likely to be fulfilled.

So this was all he knew about Mrs. Bates’s husband, and all he could tell Mr. Colorado, when that gentleman tried first to fill and then to pump him, but it was enough to give weight to a nasty shot.

She felt both angered and humiliated. Her anger at the mercantile nature of his proposal had tempted her to try to humiliate him needlessly, and now she felt ashamed on every point.

She was ashamed of her anger, ashamed at what it had prompted her to, ashamed of having talked so much with him,

ashamed of having placed herself in a position to be so talked to. Her anger had led her to try to obtain a mean and unworthy triumph, and she had succeeded, but felt none the better for it. His last remark showed the meanness of the man, but that did not console her at all.

Meanwhile Mr. Colorado pursued his way to the shore, and the way led him past where Jerves had been lying, and, to tell the truth, after a pipe and a disagreeable half-hour of meditation, had been enjoying a nap. He was awake when Colorado came up, and, recognizing his step, accosted him with, "Well, what luck?"

"None at all. Our views don't agree. I'll leave her to somebody else. She wants some 'love-in-a-cottage' chap. I'll be away before you get back. Good-bye."

"Good-bye. I wish you a pleasant voyage."

Mr. Colorado was angry and ashamed as well as Mrs. Bates, but he was angry at

himself for having made such a mistake as to put the money before the husband, when he might just as easily have done the other way. He was not so much angry with Mrs. Bates. Considering how he had blundered, he rather admired her spirit in attacking him. He was ashamed of himself for having made the mean speech he did at the last. He had been very angry, and had violated one of his cardinal principles, which was to keep cool himself and let other people get angry. He had thrown away all his chances that time, surely. He hurried back to his boat, and was rowed rapidly away. He would still keep track of her though, just out of curiosity. He wondered whether there was anything between her and Jerves after all. He could not see anything that helped him to form any opinion.

As soon as they saw him go away, the captain and his wife came up to Mrs. Bates. They were full of excitement, and

the captain's wife was for having explanations and details on the spot; but Mrs. Bates told her she must ask no questions, and she should hear all that was necessary later. The captain was the most excited, and shook both her hands, and kissed her, and his wife excused him.

“By Jove! It did me good to see the fellow go off as if he had had a thrashing. I hope you gave it to him well. The idea that a fellow like that should think of marrying our Helen! I don't see, though, how it took you so long to do it. I thought you'd dispose of him in about half a minute.”

That question of time was just a sore point with Mrs. Bates.

“Now, captain, please be quiet. I see I shall have to tell you all about it, and it isn't to my credit. Let's go now.”

They went to the beach, and all were gay but Mrs. Bates, and when they joined Jerves, Colorado was not mentioned.

In the evening, the three had a long talk, as they sat on the piazza of the hotel.

"Now, dear, begin at the beginning, and tell us all about it. I have waited about as long as I could with any pretence of patience."

"And I have waited as long as I can, *without* any pretence," added the captain.

"I wish I didn't have to tell you. I wasn't a bit nice."

"Isn't the rest going to be any truer than that?"

"Never mind whether you were nice or not; tell us about it," said Mrs. Bluson.

"He wanted me to go and live in Denver, and help him spend his money, and I told him I didn't want to."

"That wasn't all?"

"No. He wants to go to Congress."

"Did he ask you to stump the state for him? There are too many of his sort there now."

“He thought a wife would help him to get there.”

“That didn’t tempt you at all, did it, dear?”

“No.”

“Was that all you had to tell him all that time I was stuffing those boys full of cocoanuts?”

“No, for I got angry.”

“I’m glad of it.”

“I am not. I was very rude.”

“Gave him Hail Columbia for his presumption, did you? Served him right.”

“No. But he seemed to think any woman would be glad to marry him for the sake of his great house, and horses, and diamonds, and fifty thousand dollars a year to spend, and all that. That is what made me angry.”

“Was that all he had to offer?”

“Pretty nearly.”

“Didn’t he say how he had been dead in love with you from the first moment he

saw you, and that his life would be a burden to him if you wouldn't have him?"

"I don't think he did."

"Nor that you were the sweetest and most angelic of your sex, and that your eyes were stars of heaven, and your lips were crimson flowers."

"Nothing of the kind. I think he had *some* sense."

"He don't know anything at all about love-making. That is the way I had to talk when I went courting."

"You were a great goose, I confess; but I don't remember hearing anything of that sort, I am happy to say," remarked Mrs. Bluson.

"Perhaps I didn't say it right out loud, but only thought it, and wanted to say it."

"If you thought it, you were awfully mistaken, weren't you?"

"Well, just a little, perhaps. Not so much as some people."

"Never mind his nonsense, Helen. He

isn't so foolish as he pretends. Tell us the rest of your story."

"There is nothing more to tell."

"You needn't tell any more. So long as you said No, that's enough. Though, if those boys have an indigestion to-morrow, and are cross, you'll wish you hadn't been so long about it."

"You haven't told us half yet," said the captain's wife, whose feminine curiosity wanted to have a verbatim report.

"I understand it all," said the captain. "He thought Helen was going to be so pleased with all that money, and position, and so forth, that she would throw her arms right round his neck. She told him she wasn't up at auction, and then she gave him a jolly good rating for thinking she was. Wasn't it about so, Helen?"

"Your description is not very elegant; but I think your ideas are not far out of the way. I don't want to talk any more

about it. I was terribly rude. You would be ashamed of me."

"Not a bit of it. You did just right. Rude to a rhinoceros!"

"Of course you did right," said the captain's wife. But Mrs. Bates was not exactly of that opinion. "And there's poor Jerves, left alone all this time," she continued, "and we seem to have left him alone all day. Let's go and talk to him."

"But you won't tell him anything about this, will you?" asked Mrs. Bates, a little nervously.

"We shall have to let him know Mr. Colorado proposed, and was refused."

"He must know that already. I saw them talking together. There's no need to say anything about it."

"We won't mention it; and Jerves won't ask impertinent questions," said the captain.

They went and joined Jerves, who had been sitting tilted back in his chair, with

his feet on another, more *à l'Américaine* than was usual with him. Of course, he knew that Colorado had received his *congé*, and he would like to know just how it had been done, and wondered how much they would tell him. Colorado had said she wanted some "love-in-a-cottage" chap, and he was not certain whether he had meant some particular chap or not. He did not think there was any particular chap; if there had been he would probably have had some intimation of it. Anyway, she was not likely to have made Mr. Colorado her confidant; so he concluded there was not. It would not make any difference to him; but he would still like to know.

Then Rollins and Bows came in. The *Ajax* had finished discharging her Honolulu cargo, and, being almost ready for sea again, Rollins had taken Bows in charge for a run ashore, hoping to get him on board again in a seaworthy condition.

They talked, and laughed, and told stories; and Jerves had not been half as lonely as the captain's wife had imagined. Bows's sea-stories were inimitable and innumerable.

CHAPTER XV.

NEWS FROM HOME.

WHEN these went, and the others came, there was no reference made to Colorado, but Jerves found Mrs. Bates somewhat agitated, as might reasonably be expected.

Two days later the *Ajax* was ready, and again anchored in the outer harbor. In the evening they all went on board, and were heartily welcomed by all hands, from Rollins to the Hawaian cabin-boy that Jerves had engaged especially to wait on him. This boy's duties proved light, and Mrs. Bates found him more in the way than any thing else.

At sunrise all were on deck for the start, and the anchor was "short," when Mr. Bows, who was standing near Jerves, descried a thin line of black smoke in the

distance, and remarked to Jerves "There's the mail steamer from 'Frisco, I reckon."

"Is it? Then hold on. We must have our letters and papers," and Jerves sent his boy in haste to the captain, who happened to be below, and who was much surprised at Jerves's sudden anxiety for news. Before that, he had not seemed to care very much for letters, and as for newspapers, he only asked some one to read the head lines, the ship-news, and two or three stock reports to him. The captain thought it rather strange, too, that he should ask Bows or some stranger to read his letters to him instead of himself or one of the ladies. He had begun to question whether Jerves had not some troublesome secret that he did not wish them to know about. It did not appear to be anything of that kind, either, for he showed nothing like anxiety about them either before they were read or after. When he had inquired if the *Galatea* had arrived, he

showed very little interest in news anyway.

The captain was in hopes the steamer would arrive before his departure, but, as he was ready to sail did not like to delay. Now that she was at hand he was willing enough to wait a little, and, when in an hour or two the steamer had passed in, he sent Rollins ashore for their mail. Rollins soon returned with a batch of letters and papers. "One for you, sir," to the captain, "two for Mr. Jerves, three for Mrs. Bates, one for me, one for Mr. Bows, and two for forward. That's all, sir. That *Galatea* has arrived in New York, sir. Had a long passage."

Now Jerves was all attention. He took his letters, but showed no impatience to have them read to him, but rather listened to what Mrs. Bates might say. "Three letters for me? Oh, that's delightful, unless there's bad news. Let me have them, quick." She looked at the hand-

writing of the addresses, and opened the last one she came to first. She had not read very far before she cried out, "Oh, Carrie, Carrie, see what some one has done for me!" and she handed a letter to her friend. There were tears in her voice, but not tears of sorrow, and Jerves was satisfied. The sight of her face when she read her letters, that he had thought so much about when he sent his, was denied him; but, on the other hand, the bandage covered so much of his face that there was no danger it would betray him. The captain's wife read the letter, and then crossed the deck, took the small head in her arms, pressed it to her heart, and the two friends had a good cry together. Then they read the rest.

It was from Jere Haskins, and said: —
"The Trust Company's letter that I enclose will tell you of the good fortune that has happened to little Helen. Of course you cannot know anything about it, and

there seems to be some mystery about it. I thought you would want me to ascertain who gave the money if I could, because it might come from somebody you would not want to take it from. I went to the Trust Company, and they said they did not know who gave it, or anything about it, except that they were to pay the money. I asked so many questions that they finally gave me the name of the lawyer, who, they said, drew the 'trust deed.' He would not tell me much, and said the name of his client was a professional secret, and beyond that he had nothing more to do with the matter. The money was to be paid to me while I acted as Helen's guardian, and if she married she was to have the principal, and if she died it was to go to her mother. If I did not take it the Trust Company would keep it. The giver himself could not get it back again. There was nothing for me to do but to use it as directed. I

need have no scruples, nor need her mother. It was 'clean' money. It did not come from any of those who led poor Charlie astray. He said that so long as Helen was with me I should receive payment for taking care of her, and I told him I didn't want any pay. He said that was none of his business; I could do as I liked, if I could afford it. He is a nice, tall, thin-faced, clean-shaved old gentleman, with long white hands, and when he begins to talk he puts the tips of his fingers together in a curious way. When I had got through talking, and was ready to go, he began asking me questions. He made me tell nearly everything I knew, all about Helen, and about myself, and about you. I don't know how he did it, but he asked such questions I couldn't help answering. He asked about my wife, and I told him about her; and he made me tell how I lost my ship, and somehow he managed to get everything out of me. I told him I might

have gone second mate on the ship you are on, — Rollins wanted me to, — and he asked if there were any other passengers, and I said none that I knew of. He said he had seen an account of the *Ajax* picking up a wreck with yellow fever on board, and towing her to Bermuda. He said those men who went on the wreck were brave fellows. Then I told him about Rollins, and he made me give him his name, and wrote it down. Then we talked about everything, and I had to tell him how we ran past the batteries at Vicksburg in '63, — Rollins and me; and he said Rollins ought to have a medal. I told him how your two brothers died at Fredericksburg, and he said his only son was killed at Gettysburg. He was very kind and good, but I never saw such a man to make people talk. He kept me more than two hours, and then his carriage came to take him home, and he made me get in with him. He pretended he

wanted to get some things to send to a friend in the country, and he wished I would help him select them, and he drove to a great store, and picked out a lot of useful things, and I helped him as well as I could. Then he shook hands with me, and asked if he might come and see us when he went to the mountains in the summer. So I came home again. The next day the stage brought a great parcel addressed to Margaret, and inside was this note: "Please accept these from an old man whose only son died with your brother at Gettysburg." Then I remembered the name of poor Frank's captain, and how the old lawyer looked when I told him that Margaret's brother was killed at Gettysburg, too."

There was a great deal more in the letter, and when it was read, Mrs. Bates went to her room. An hour later when she returned to the deck there were no tears in eyes or voice, though she stood a

long time leaning against the after-mizzen mast, looking eastward.

Bows read Jerves's letters to him. They merely said his instructions had been carried out. This, with Mrs. Bates's cry to the captain's wife was enough for his reveries, as he lay back idle in his chair. He did not even care to smoke. By and by Mrs. Bates came to him and said, "Oh, Mr. Jerves, you ought to know what a great thing some one has done for me. I don't know who it is, but may God bless him forever. May I read you two letters? I cannot keep my happiness to myself."

Again Jerves was almost glad of the bandages over his eyes, and he had to make a considerable effort to keep his voice steady enough to answer, "Certainly, I shall be very glad."

She read the Trust Company's letter first. It was nearly a copy of the draft he had sent. "Only think of it! Fifty

dollars a month to my little girl! I can't think who sends it. I wonder if he knows what it means. Why, it means food and clothes and books and schools; if she has health, it means everything that she needs. And to me it means, oh, so much! I cannot begin to tell you what it means. I suppose to you, who are rich, it seems little, but to me it is a great deal."

"Have you no idea from whom it comes?" he ventured at length to ask.

"None, and since Jere says I may take it without scruple, and it is what he calls 'clean' money, I am not sure that I ought to try to find out. What do you think?"

"It seems to me you should not try, since the giver wishes to remain unknown."

"I am glad you think so. I suppose it comes from some old friend of my father. I don't think I know any one rich enough to do such a thing, but somebody has

done it. I hope it is right for me to take it."

"It would seem useless to refuse it, under the circumstances."

Then she read Jere's letter to him.

"Isn't Jere a splendid fellow? See how he gives the credit for everything to somebody else, when everybody knows he is the bravest man that ever lived, and the kindest heart. He knew I would not want to take the money if it wasn't 'clean.' And how quickly the old lawyer found him out. I am too happy to-day. I hope it is not wrong to be so happy. And there's Margaret, too! the sweetest wife ever any man had. Think of her delight! What kind people there are in the world! I wonder if that man will ever know all the happiness he has caused. But he's sure to know it some time."

"If he knows, he will be no less happy than you, I am sure. I am glad myself to know of so much happiness. I congratu-

late you with all my heart," and he held out his hand to her. It was steady now, but he felt that hers trembled.

"Thank you. Thank you." She went away to tell Rollins about it. Rollins was Jere's friend, and had seen Helen. It was right he should know about it. Mr. Rollins heard the Trust Company's letter, and gave a long whistle. "By Jove, that fellow's a trump." "Have you any idea who it could be?" she asked. "I don't know anything about it," he replied, though somehow a sudden recollection of the evening when he had walked and talked with Jerves on the deck, had flashed over him, and he remembered the letters sent by the *Galatea*. "I don't know anything about it, but I am mighty glad of it. Please excuse me a minute."

He went forward, in a great hurry, to berate the carpenter for some work done awkwardly two days before, and came back shortly, quite composed. "Now, let

me hear Jere's letter," and she read it to him. "Jere's a fine fellow. That battery business was all his, though. I didn't have much to do with it. That old lawyer saw through him, though, didn't he? And wasn't it handsome of him to send the things to Jere's wife?"

Rollins went to his duty, and the *Ajax* moved away under the gentle breeze. There were happy hearts on board that day, but whether Mrs. Bates or Jerves was the happier, it would be hard to tell. They all sat on deck till very late that night, singing, and talking of home. Even the boys were not put to bed till Bobby fell asleep in his mother's lap, and Harry on the deck at Mrs. Bates's feet.

CHAPTER XVI.

LIGHT.

THE next day was Sunday. Jerves came out of his room with his young valet, and inquired anxiously for Mrs. Bluson. She had not yet appeared, at which he was disappointed. Mrs. Bates was on deck, and, noticing his agitation, inquired, "What is it, Mr. Jerves? Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Nothing, thank you, only — may I sit near you?"

She rose, and gave him her chair.

"I want to tell you something. I was going to tell Mrs. Bluson first; but I must tell somebody. Last night, when I was lying in my berth, my bandage annoyed me, and I took it off. I kept my eyes closed, as I always do, and fell asleep.

I don't know how long I slept ; but when I awoke I opened my eyes unconsciously — and — and — I could see a little ! And without pain ! There was not much light ; but I could distinguish objects in the room. When the light grew strong enough to hurt me, I replaced the bandage. Can it be that my sight is coming again ?”

She took one of his hands between both of hers, and raised it high, as if in thanksgiving.

“ Oh, I hope so ! I believe so ! It must be so ! What a joy ! What a joy ! What a happy ship this will be to-day ! Let me call the captain and Carrie.”

She ran to the companion-way, and called, “ Robert, Carrie, Mr. Jerves wants you both up here. Come right away.”

The tone of voice did not alarm them ; but they came quickly. Mrs. Bates, however, was not with them. She had slipped quietly to her room, feeling a tumult of emotions too great for control. She was

very happy yesterday; but the happiness of to-day was even greater—and that, she knew, ought not to be. She tried, as it were to find excuses for it. Little Helen was far away, and Jerves was here before her. She was too young to realize her good-fortune; and Jerves had known the blessing he had lost. Lack of money was nothing to the loss of sight. These were poor reasons, after all. There was another greater than these, and she felt herself blushing all over, as at length she realized it. She loved that man. Again and again and again she refused to admit it, and again and again she was obliged to confess in her heart that it was true. There was pleasure mingled with the pain with which she gave up the attempt to deny it.

Then came over her a feeling of shame at having given it where it had not been asked. He had never given sign by word or look that he preferred her to any other

woman. Indeed, he had spoken lightly of all women, and said he wanted nothing to do with any. He had always been kind and polite to her, very kind and very thoughtful. That was his nature. He would not be unkind to any one. She could not say that he had ever been anything more than kind and polite; but there was, she thought, more than ordinary gentleness about his kindness, and thoughtfulness about his politeness. Still, she knew her love was not returned, and that she must hide and stifle it. A few days more, and their voyage would be over. They would go their separate ways; probably would never meet again. When the bell rang for service, she bathed her face, and dried her eyes; and looked over her prayer-book for a "Thanksgiving for Unexpected Mercies," and, finding none, extemporized one for herself, and came out as calm as usual.

Jerves had told the captain and his wife,

and there had been great rejoicing. The captain slapped him on the back, and gave three cheers, to Bows's great astonishment; and his wife had taken both Jerves's hands, and shaken them well, and adjusted his bandages with even greater nicety than usual; and told him over and over again how careful he must be. To-morrow she would have goggles made of wire, and would cover them with black muslin, and he should have a black shade, and a green one to wear as his eyes became stronger. Altogether the little woman was in a state of great excitement; while her husband walked back and forth, stopping at every turn to put his hands on their shoulders, and say he hadn't heard any such good news in a year.

Jerves missed Mrs. Bates's voice and presence; but remembered clearly how she had taken his hand in hers, and thought he could imagine how she looked when she did it. When the others went away, he

missed her the more. She had got into the habit of sitting somewhere near him, when she was reading or sewing, and, though neither might speak, he liked to hear the rustle of her dress occasionally.

He thought now of Dulcifer, and wondered what kind of a life she would have led if she had married him. And then he thought, as he had so often before, how different life would have been for him if he had met her, or one like her, ten, or even five years ago. He went over the same ground as before, and came to the same conclusion. It was too late. Besides, he doubted whether he could make her happier than she was now.

He might regain his sight, but not his lost years. He would never marry. He had said it was only necessary to keep away from women to avoid marrying them, and it seemed the easiest thing in the world to do. It was not easy on ship-board to keep away from her; but he

would do it. He did not think he had ever been more than polite to her, and he would try to be less than polite hereafter. It would be only a few days more, anyway. From Hong Kong she would go east, and, if his eyes improved, he would go westward round the world. He did try, and partially succeeded, though it was harder than he thought. It was hard to forbear politeness, almost to rudeness, when every impulse of his heart was towards regard and tenderness.

She aided him somewhat, for her reserve equalled his. She no longer gave him her arm for a walk on the deck, or her hand to lead him down the companion-way. She read no more books to him, and, though she made many sketches, her entries in the journal were short. This constraint in their relations, formerly so free, open, and unembarrassed, attracted the attention of the captain, and mystified him exceedingly; and he found no answer to the question he

so often asked himself, as he walked the deck, "What the deuce is the row?"

His good wife was mystified, and chagrined besides. Here were these two, who, she had vainly hoped, might somehow be brought together, going daily farther and farther apart. She really felt sorry for both—and angry with both as well.

CHAPTER XVII.

A PROPOSAL.

THE good ship kept on. Winds were light, but fair. They met no severe storms, and saw no more wrecks. Days passed without events of interest. Jerves's eyes continued to grow stronger, and the goggles and shades took the place of bandages. He had already decided on keeping on westward, and looked over the maps with the captain. He would spend so much time in China, so much in India, so much in Japan. Then he would visit Persia, Afghanistan, Russia. He would take three years for it. Where would they all be in three years?

He talked more than usual of his plans one evening when they were all seated on the deck.

The captain brought it about by referring some way to their first conversation about women and matrimony, and speculating on what kind of a wife the authorities of "Jerves's friend's" proposed establishment would select for Mr. Colorado. The captain and his wife constituted themselves an imaginary committee to choose one for him, and the one they chose was not much like Mrs. Bates. Then they amused themselves by selecting one for Mr. Jerves, for they insisted that if the women must be married, whether they liked it or no, so must the men. The combination of qualities they gave this imaginary bride was in the end such an impossible one that Jerves accused them of arguing against their own premises, since, if an impossible wife was the only suitable one for a man, it was clear he would not be obliged to have any. But Mrs. Bates reminded them that the questions of temper and disposition were the only ones the authorities had to consider :

and that they might think best to give a mild and peaceable husband some furious vixen of a termagant for a wife. So the captain allotted Jerves one of that kind, just to see how he would like it, and they tried to picture the scenes that would take place when he should attempt to administer necessary personal chastisement. Jerves thought he would get round that nicely, for, as he designed to spend three years in travel, all he would need do was to lock her up till he came back, which would be the most convenient arrangement in the world. This brought them round to talk of his plans and routes.

Altogether, the discussion was lively and entertaining. Mrs. Bates was especially brilliant, and rather sarcastic, and spared Jerves not at all. The captain, however, went back to Mr. Colorado, and Jerves learned all he cared to know about that gentleman's proposal, and how it was received. There was no stopping the cap-

tain when he got started on that subject, though Mrs. Bates did her best to shut him up.

“I wonder where we shall all be in a year from to-night,” said Mrs. Bluson, after an unusual period of silence.

“It would be hard telling,” replied her husband. “I may be in the president’s chair of the Lookout Insurance Company. I have more than half promised to take it when I get back. I don’t suppose I shall go to sea any more, unless I get *very* homesick.”

“I shall be teaching geography and spelling again, I hope. I think I may get my old place again. I am well enough to fill it now, and feel as if I should never be ill again.”

“A good vacation you will have had, dear. And I am sure it will do you a great deal of good.”

“Indeed it will. I never dreamed of having such a holiday as this. It has re-

newed my life. But you deceived me a little, Carrie. You said I could be useful to you, and here I have done nothing but enjoy myself."

"If you call cramming Harry full of multiplication-table, and worrying Bob with a-b abs, enjoying yourself, you must have had a first-rate time. I shouldn't enjoy *myself* at it," said the captain.

"Two hours a day five days in the week, from which the father generally excused them three, and their mother two. I haven't found the teaching hard."

"The boys have learned all the same. I don't know how you managed it."

"You have made them behave themselves properly, and kept them from teasing the life out of me, anyway," said Mrs. Bluson. "I think that is enough."

"You see, Helen, you have been altogether mistaken. You thought you were enjoying yourself, when you were only making other people happy."

“I am glad if I have done anything that way. It seems to me it cannot have been much.”

“I think you have no occasion to reproach yourself on that score, Mrs. Bates,” said Jerves.

“Thank you, Mr. Jerves. You have all been very kind to me.”

That was a good deal for Jerves to say. Considering the feelings she knew he had when she came on board, it was a very great deal, and she did thank him in her heart.

“And when you get back, where will you spend the summer, captain?” asked Jerves.

“I don’t know. We’ll find a place somewhere for a few weeks. I shall have to be in New York in October if I go into the Lookout.”

“Why won’t you all go down to my place at Redbank. There’s a big house all ready for you, and quite at your ser-

vice. There's a farm, and a garden, and no end of fruits and vegetables; and no one to eat them. You are quite welcome."

"There's an offer for you, Carrie. What do you say to it?"

"Oh, I'll go fast enough, if Helen will come and keep house for me."

"What do you say, Helen?"

"Oh, I must go to work. I mustn't play any more. I must see about getting a school. You all know I have my living to earn when I get back."

"What will you do if you can't get your school again?"

"Then I'll try music lessons."

"Never you mind the school. You go down there and help Carrie keep house. Harry and Bob will be school enough for you."

"I won't have Helen helping *me* keep house. I'll help her if she likes. My housekeeping isn't up to her standard, by a long way."

“If Mrs. Bates wants a housekeeper’s position, I know of one for her, and rather a good one,” said Jerves.

“You?”

“Yes. I’ll give a good housekeeper five hundred dollars a year to keep Redbank open till I come back. She can have all that she wants from the farm and garden, and as many servants as she needs.”

“Keep Redbank open all the year round, Jerves?”

“Yes. Just as it was in my good old father’s time.”

“But, Mr. Jerves, you cannot want to pay all the expenses of a house that you never visit.”

“Indeed I do. It went to my heart to close it up; but I could not stay there quite alone all winter; and I had one housekeeper who lived in one room, kept no servants, and, if I sent any of my friends there, let them go away hungry. Then I had another who kept four ser-

vants, and open house for all her family and acquaintance all the time. In my dear father's time we always had a plate and a bed for any friend who might come, and I wish it could be so again. I will gladly give a housekeeper five hundred dollars a year."

"There's an offer for you, and a good one this time, Helen. It is not as large as Colorado's; but, except the horses, and the diamonds, and being a governor's wife, and cutting a swell at Washington, I don't know but it is just as good."

"A great deal better, for you don't have to take Mr. Colorado with it," said Mrs. Bluson, whose dislike to that gentleman was as great as ever.

None of them had any idea she would accept the proposition, but, as she did not reject it at once, Jerves began to hope she might accept. He was pleased to think of Mrs. Bates in his father's old mansion. His father would have liked such a woman as

she to be in it. As for her, she could not help seeing that here was a home and an assured support for three years; and, though she would have preferred teaching, she knew that her chance of getting a teacher's position was rather precarious, and that of getting a living by music-teaching still more so. She thought it all over while Jerves was speaking, debating whether there could be anything menial about such a situation, and deciding, as well she might, that, if there were, Jerves would not have offered it to her. She knew the man well enough to be certain of that.

After a little silence, she whispered to her friend, "Do you suppose I could have my baby with me?"

The whisper was not so low but Jerves caught it, and answered, "Most assuredly."

That was the first intimation she gave that she was considering the proposition

seriously, and it pleased him. He continued : —

“I don’t think the position would be in the least difficult or disagreeable. The housekeeper’s principal duty would be to direct the indoor servants. The farmer would supply the vegetables, and the gardener the fruits, and the tradesmen the other requisites ; and my agent pays all the bills.”

“It is not a bad offer, Helen. Perhaps you had better think it over. It can’t be harder than school-teaching.”

“Mr. Jerves’s offer is too liberal. I don’t think I should be worth it. I could not get much more than that by teaching, and should have to pay all my expenses. It is too much.”

“Now, just listen to that, will you, Jerves? What queer creatures women are! Colorado offered a hundred times as much, and she didn’t think it was enough. There’s no consistency about them.”

“Colorado, again!” ejaculated his wife.

“Captain, please not mention Mr. Dulcifer any more. That little episode is over. It does not interest Mr. Jerves, and I am not proud of it myself.”

In this she was mistaken, for Jerves did feel an interest in it.

“Well, I won’t — perhaps. But you and Carrie had better go to bed, while Jerves and I have a smoke. Now, don’t sit up all night talking it over. You’ll have plenty of time. We are not at Hong Kong yet.”

They were still talking it over when the pipes were smoked, and the men went below. They talked it over again the next day, and the next, and the next after that; and, after all their consideration, they concluded that they should all spend what might remain of the summer, after their return, at Redbank; and that Mrs. Bates should continue there as housekeeper during Jerves’s absence. Jerves was pleased.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FAREWELL TO THE AJAX.

HONG KONG was reached a few days later. The crowds and the strange people and customs interested them, but it was not part of the captain's plan to remain there. Two weeks sufficed to discharge the cargo, and transfer the *Ajax* to her new owners. Our friends bade her farewell with regret. For four months she had made them a pleasant home.

But the steamer for San Francisco was ready. Good-byes must be said, the family broken up, the friends separated. The parting could not be otherwise than sad, but it came, and was over. The captain and his party steamed away to the east, while Rollins and Jerves waved farewells from the dock.

Jerves went to his room, and there fully

realized his loneliness. He was really a lonely man. A home indeed he had, and a comfortable one, but he was more lonely in it than under the hospitable roof of his bankers in Hong Kong. He had no near relatives, and the distant ones, whose only interest in him was the hope that they might some day inherit his property, he scarcely knew. There was no one to care where he went, or what he did. There was no reason why he should be in China — or in any other place, except that no one cared for him anywhere. He had only a mild curiosity to see unknown countries, and, since his friends of the *Ajax* were gone, even sight-seeing was dull. He had laid out a three years' plan of travel, but somehow felt no ambition to commence it. For a moment he wished that he also was on board the *Oceanic*, eastward bound.

He was glad he had provided a home and an income for Mrs. Bates, during his

absence. She would be comfortably situated for three years at least, and after that he would find some other way to provide for her. He wondered whether she would have married him, if he had asked her, and whether he could have made her happier than she would be otherwise. He went out and hunted up Rollins, who was looking for another ship, and, like himself, was just then rather lonely. Captain Bluson had already found a berth for Bows as second mate on an American ship, bound for Java to load sugar for home. Her master was as temperate in his use of alcoholic drinks, as he was intemperate in his language concerning them, and Bows went out of port again sober. There did appear a prospect of "making something out of Bows," for to be second mate on two voyages, and to go out of his harbor sober three times in succession, gave him an idea of new possibilities.

Jerves's fit of blues passed off, under the

influences of Rollins's talk, and before their interview was over, he greatly astonished that gentleman, by asking him to join him in his three years' tour. He would continue his mate's wages, and pay all expenses of both.

Rollins gave another of his whistles, but this time longer than usual.

"See here, do you know what that sort of a trip would cost you?"

"I can't say I do."

"Why, it would cost you twenty thousand dollars a year."

"I suppose so."

"Do you mean to say you want to put out twenty thousand dollars a year on that little lark?"

"I didn't imagine it would cost less than that."

"Well, if you are made up of shiners to that extent, and want my company, I don't mind. Only I want the pay to go to that good mother of mine. I expect she'd

rather I'd come home once in a while, but then she would quite as lief I should be on land, as at sea, and perhaps I shouldn't be away any longer either."

Jerves readily promised to arrange it, and they closed the bargain on the spot, though why a man with twenty thousand dollars a year, should want to spend it on shore, instead of keeping a yacht, was more than Rollins could understand.

Jerves's grandfather had, many years before, owned a farm, on what had since become the site of a great manufacturing city. He sold out part of the water-power which was on it, and bought more land, and sold some of that again, little by little, as it increased in value. His only son, Jerves's father, had done much the same thing, and had built stores and houses, until now the once barren and rocky farm was covered with buildings and busy streets. So his wealth grew, almost without any exertion of his own, and two

or three unusually shrewd, or, as his neighbors said, lucky, investments, had so added to it, that, when his father died, Bernard Jerves found himself in possession of an income far beyond his wants. Inherited habits restrained him from wasteful extravagance, and, until now, he had never fully used his income. The amounts, therefore, that Mrs. Bates and Rollins considered so large, were not greater than he could freely afford to expend.

Redbank had been built by the father during his early married life, but his wife had not lived long to enjoy it, and of their three children two had died in infancy. Bernard Jerves himself had no recollection of his mother. He had lived, except when at school and college, generally alone with his father, and had little knowledge of women in the relations of home and family. Later, his two disappointments and his sicknesses had sobered and soured him. He was well bred, and well educated

enough to shine in society if he would take the trouble; but society had no charm for him, and with his ideas about women was even distasteful. His life on the *Ajax* had proved the pleasantest he had known for several years. It was not strange that he should seek in the active habits, exuberant spirits, and lively conversation of Rollins an antidote for the depression he found coming over him, or that he should wish for companionship in his travels. Rollins was a sailor, but an educated, though self-educated, sailor, and he brought from the sea only enough of its salt to give freshness and vigor to the air. He bade fair to be an excellent companion for the quiet, steady-going Jerves.

Captain Bluson and his family had a prosperous voyage to San Francisco. If they found the noise and jar and smell of the machinery less pleasant than the easy roll of the *Ajax*, they had the satisfaction of making rapid progress, and, once

started, they were impatient to arrive. A few days' rest in California, and then they were away to the East, until they found themselves once again in the noisy city they had left six months before.

CHAPTER XIX.

REDBANK.

ONE bright, hot forenoon, Mrs. Bates, with little Helen and the two servants she had engaged, drove up the long hill that led to the mansion of Redbank. The first sight struck her with dismay, the house was so large, and with its closed doors and windows looked so gloomy. The farmer's busy, bustling, garrulous wife, seeing the expected arrivals, hurried from her house near by with the keys, followed by three barefooted little girls in sunbonnets. Doors and windows were soon thrown open, the sunlight let in, and in ten minutes little Helen and the barefoot girls were racing up and down the stairways, opening and peering into every closet and corner. Mrs. Bates followed

more slowly. The great parlors, with their linen-covered furniture, their pictures and statues, the library, dining-room, billiard-room, and the numerous sleeping-rooms oppressed her, and made her feel, as she sank exhausted into a chair, just as the farmer's wife said she looked, "as though she wished she hadn't a-come." The farmer's wife, however, gave her very little time for indulging her feelings, but chattered on: "There ain't nothin' to eat in the house, of course, but there's a lot o' groceries and things out there, and the man he's a-comin' to see if you want any more. I didn't cook nothin' for yer, 'cause I didn't know jest when yer was a-comin', but I can let yer have a couple o' loaves o' bread jest to start on, and I've got some nice mornin's milk, an' some cream, an' a pat o' butter—we sold most all our butter yesterday, but I'll churn again to-morrow—an' some eggs, an' John he'll be in from the hay-

field pretty soon, an' he'll bring yer some potatoes, an' some peas, an', maybe, some 'sparrer-grass, or sunthing, an' I know he's got a nice quarter o' lamb for yer. There's a pan full o' doughnuts in my pantry, and maybe your little one would like to run over with my girls, an' get some—they're right there on the shelf, they can help themselves—an' I'll bring you over some o' my pies when I get 'em baked. We'll get yer all fixed out in a day or two. Perhaps you'd like to see the kitchen; most women thinks a good deal o' their kitchen, an' this is a pretty good kitchen, this one is, and plenty of things to do with."

Mrs. Bates's brain whirled, but she followed to the kitchen. The cook had been before her, and, true to her instincts, had laid off her bonnet, pinned up her skirts, lighted a fire, and started a lively altercation with her associate, the housemaid, as to which evenings they should have out,

in the most natural manner possible. The farmer's wife bethought her of her baking. "Goodness me, my pies won't never get baked this way, an' them men'll be comin' in hungrier 'n dogs. Seems as though they couldn't never get enough to eat. Mr. Jerves wrote how you was to have the blue room and the two bedrooms off 'n it, and I meant to have tidied 'em up a little, but, law me! I ain't had no chance. These hayin' times, seems 's though I didn't do nothin' but cook. I'll send John right over soon 's he comes in." Soon after, "John" came over, in his shirt-sleeves, with a basket in his hand, and a bag over his shoulder, followed by one bare-foot girl with a pail, and another with a pitcher, and the third with little Helen, still nibbling doughnuts.

"How d'ye do, ma'am? Glad to see ye. Béen a-lookin' for ye; but didn't know when ye'd come. I've brought ye some vegetables and things, an' I'll get some

more for ye. Putty busy ye see we are these good hayin' days. Come along, gals."

He deposited his load on the floor and departed, but was hardly out of the door before another man appeared, who presented his compliments in broad Scotch, and said he was the gardener, and had brought "a bit strawberries" and a "wee han'fu' o' flowers," and was glad to see somebody in the house, for it was "nae eencooragen" to try to keep things tidy, when there was "naebody aboot to obseerve 'em at a', but the village folk an' them."

She got rid of the Scotchman at last, and began unpacking, while the three little girls, who were back again by this time, sat on a broad sofa, with their six brown legs sticking straight out before them, watching her. The farmer came back to say that the man with the horses was come, and would she have him sleep in the stable or in the house? He thought he had better sleep in

the house, "seein' there arn't no other men, and women folks mostly likes to have some kind o' men folks within call."

"What horses and what man do you mean?"

"Why, Mr. Jerves he wrote to me to buy a carriage-horse for the use o' the house, and a pony for the little girl. I hope they'll suit. I know he's a good horse; and they say the man I got knows his business. If he don't, we'll ship him off, and get another."

Mrs. Bates was glad when bed-time came. All this house, and garden, and stable — she was thankful she had nothing to do with the farm — were too much, and she was almost ready to cry as she thought of the magnitude of the task she had undertaken.

Morning tranquillized her somewhat. Having lain awake nearly all night, she slept late, and, on rising, found a neat breakfast ready for her, the house cool and

quiet, and nobody about to annoy her. She saw the gardener at work on the lawn, and a man washing carriages at the stable, but none of them came to trouble her. She wrote a long letter to her friend Mrs. Bluson, and apparently might have remained undisturbed all day, if Helen had not discovered the pony. After that, there was no peace until a first lesson in riding had been given by the careful groom.

“The other’s a good saddle-beast, too, Shall I put a side-saddle on him for you, ma’am?” Mrs. Bates would not ride that day, but afterwards she and Helen took many a ride together.

It was more than a week before she had got quite settled, and had succeeded in reducing the farmer’s daily supply of provisions below what would be needed for a week.

Then the captain and his family came, and the horse and the pony had all the exercise they wanted, and sometimes more.

Neither gardener, cook, nor groom complained of not having enough to do, and the house was noisy enough, for the captain, when quite off duty and let loose, was as boyish as Bobby himself.

August and September came and went, and with September went the captain's party.

"Come again next summer."

"Indeed we will—unless we come at New Year's and stay till Christmas."

Mrs. Bates had enough to do, though she found the care of the establishment much less than she feared. The out-of-door men knew their business, and a daily walk through stables, gardens, and green-houses was all the attention they required from her. In-doors, after she had once or twice "sat down on" the cook, she had very little trouble. Every month she received a little packet of views and sketches from Jerves, all carefully marked and labelled, but no other news. She was not

inclined to make many acquaintances, but, after Jerves's local agent had visited her, and reported her to be not a "house-keeper" at all, but a lady of education and refinement, and had sent his wife and married daughters to call on her, she had all the company she wanted. This gentleman was a lawyer, a large, heavy man, a little round-shouldered, with shaggy eyebrows, and a fringe of white hair and beard that had once been sandy. He had been the local legal and business agent of the Jerves family all his professional life; and it was a matter of great concern to him now in his old age what would become of their property when he should no longer be able to look after it. His greatest satisfaction in the marriage of the last of his daughters was that he thought her husband was sharp enough and honest enough to succeed him.

He called often on Mrs. Bates for news of "Bernard," but, beyond the regular

packages of views and sketches, she had none to give him, though, by means of these and various maps, they together followed him for a time in his wanderings. The old man expressed his disgust and impatience at Jerves's long stay, very freely, emphasizing his remarks by angry thumps of his ivory-headed cane. "Why don't the fellow come home? What on earth is he rambling round away out there for? It is quite time he came home, and married, and settled down. I am out of patience with him. If a man has a home, he ought to stay in it."

Whereat Mrs. Bates suggested that Mr. Jerves was extremely fond of travel. "What if he is? He's travelled enough. He might let somebody else do the rest. I am going to write to him to come home. I want to see him. He'd better come back, and attend to his own affairs. I am getting too old, anyway."

If the truth were known, the lawyer

was privately of the same opinion as Mrs. Bluson, that Jerves not only ought to be married, but that Mrs. Bates was the most suitable woman in all the world for him.

One evening towards spring, he came in in great trouble.

Jerves had written him that he was about going on a long and somewhat dangerous expedition, and wished to make some alterations in his will. "And I suppose I must tell you, Mrs. Bates, that they relate mostly to you, and that you need have no anxiety about your future, so far as money is concerned. Bernard wrote me to let you know that you need have no concern on that score. The ridiculous fellow! I wish he'd come back. Confound him! No, I don't mean that, but I want to see him. He's sent home a great lot of tiger-skins, and all sorts of things, that nobody has any use for. I wish he'd bring his own skin back. What does a man like him want to make an

exploring expedition of himself for?" and the old man punched a hole in the carpet in his excitement. Mrs. Bates's eyes were full of tears. The old man noticed them, and, laying his large hand gently on her shoulder, said, "I think he will come some day, dear, and I hope it *will* be soon," and he went away with tears in his own eyes also. But that was the last they heard of Bernard Jerves for many a month.

Summer and winter, and summer again, came and went, and still no news of him — no letters, no more parcels of sketches. Curiosity deepened into anxiety, and anxiety grew more anxious.

Mrs. Bates's cheek lost something of its bloom, the old man grew visibly older. These two now met every day, to know if, by any chance, the other had any news, though both knew that if one had any the other would have it very quickly.

Jerves and Rollins stayed only a short time in Hong Kong. It was not a place

of much attraction. They visited Canton and Shanghai, and every accessible part of the great Chinese Empire, finding endless interest and adventure. Rollins was constantly getting them into scrapes, and as constantly getting them out. His energy and resources in both directions were inexhaustible. He learned to take great delight in Jerves's camera, and he became the photographer, and Jerves the artist of their expeditions. From China they went to Japan, and explored that wonderful and interesting country well.

Then they turned back again, and, not content with tourists' routes, Singapore, Penang, Benares, Bombay, they followed every route in Northern India to its utmost limit, and beyond. Well armed and equipped, cool shots, hard riders, and inclined to be reckless of danger, ready for any hunt or fray, they were welcome guests at many a lonely station, where visitors of their kind were few. Rollins

proved a born geographer, as well as explorer. That a mountain seemed inaccessible, was only an additional reason why he should take the altitude, the latitude, and the longitude, of its highest peak.

They joined a British expedition to the borders of Thibet, and, returning from that, helped to make up a hunting party in Central India.

It was of this long and eventful journey that no news reached their friends at home, simply because a steamer carrying the mails was lost at sea. All their views and sketches, and all their records of a year's adventures, went down in her.

It was more than a year after the visit of the lawyer to Mrs. Bates, when he had first read her secret, a secret she was not ashamed and sometimes hardly sorry to have him know, that the steamer from Capetown for Madeira and Southampton numbered among its passengers two worn and haggard wretches, whom no one would

have recognized as the Jerves and Rollins of the *Ajax*.

Wandering away among the Boers of South Africa, they had been severely wounded by savages, and Rollins had barely escaped with his life. It was months before they were able to be moved, and months again before the slow, painful, and toilsome conveyances of the country brought them once more to regions of civilization. More dead than alive, they reached the steamer which an hour afterward was under way. "I'll do what I can for them," said the ship's surgeon, "but I doubt they ever see Madeira, let alone Southampton." Perhaps the thought that they were homeward bound kept them up, for they did see Madeira, and Southampton also. There they caught a steamer for New York by almost as narrow a chance as they had had with the one from Capetown. Once on blue water, Rollins, whose life had so long been despaired of, improved rapidly ;

but Jerves, who, at Capetown, was the stronger of the two, rather grew weaker. His only wish now seemed to be that he might see Redbank once more.

It was Christmas eve, and a furious storm was raging. Mrs. Bates was sitting before the fire, with an unopen but well-worn book in her lap. Her last little gift for Helen was finished, and she sat listening to the howling of the wind, and thinking of the Christmas on the *Ajax*, and wondering where the owner of Redbank might be this fearful night. Was he exposed to its fury, or was he now sleeping in the sea or in some unknown grave?

Absorbed in her thoughts she heard no sound; but, feeling cold air from an opened door, she turned. The face she saw had scarcely more color than the snow that hung about it, but she knew it at once.

“Oh, Mr. Jerves! Mr. Jerves! Thank God! Thank God!”

“Yes, Mrs. Bates. I am at home at last. I thought I should never reach it. Let me sit down. I am weak.”

She took off his wet wrappings, and set him by the fire.

“You are ill. You are very ill. Why did you not send for me? I would have come to you.”

“Yes, Mrs. Bates. I have been very ill. I scarcely hoped to see Redbank or you again. But now—Helen, I have come home to die.”

He held out his feeble hands to her. She took them in both her strong ones.

She had realized long ago that all this tender, thoughtful care for her welfare and happiness was the care of one who loved her, and loved her well, though he might never say it. Now that he had called her “Helen,” and held out his hands to her, there was no need of many words.

“After all this dreadful waiting, that you should come home like this! But you

must not die ! You shall not die ! God is too good ! ”

She rang the bell, and ordered a fire in the room that was always clean and ready for him, sent off the groom for a doctor, and a message, with the scribbled words, “He has come ” to the lawyer. Then she had him put to bed, and sat with one of his hands in hers until he slept. Before he fell asleep, he said, “Helen, I was afraid I could not make you happy.”

“I shall be happy now, when you are well again.”

He did not die, and six weeks ago I christened their daughter.

THE END.

HELPS TO A HAPPY SUMMER.

OF COURSE you will make a summer journey to some lovely place far beyond the cities and their reek of smoke and dust; send your bonds to the safe-deposit vault; double-bar the doors; get a boarding-place for the cat; and buy a round-trip ticket to Utopia. To find out where Utopia is, amid vast blue mountains, or by shore of sylvan lake, or alongside the resounding sea (according as your individual taste may elect), you should get one of **Ticknor's American Guide-Books**, which tell all about the summer resorts between the Hudson River and Baffin's Bay, with their prices and accommodations and attractions, and how to get to them, and, in general, their legends and poetry, and scenic charms. The railroad companies give away many thousands of small pamphlets about their routes, but these are not without suspicion of self-magnifying, and should be corrected by an unprejudiced, unsubsidized, accurate, and honest guide-book, whose cost, in comparison with the outlay on a summer's trip, is trivial, while its hints may be of frequent and great value.

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